

IN THESE TIMES

Bad news
for the Daily News

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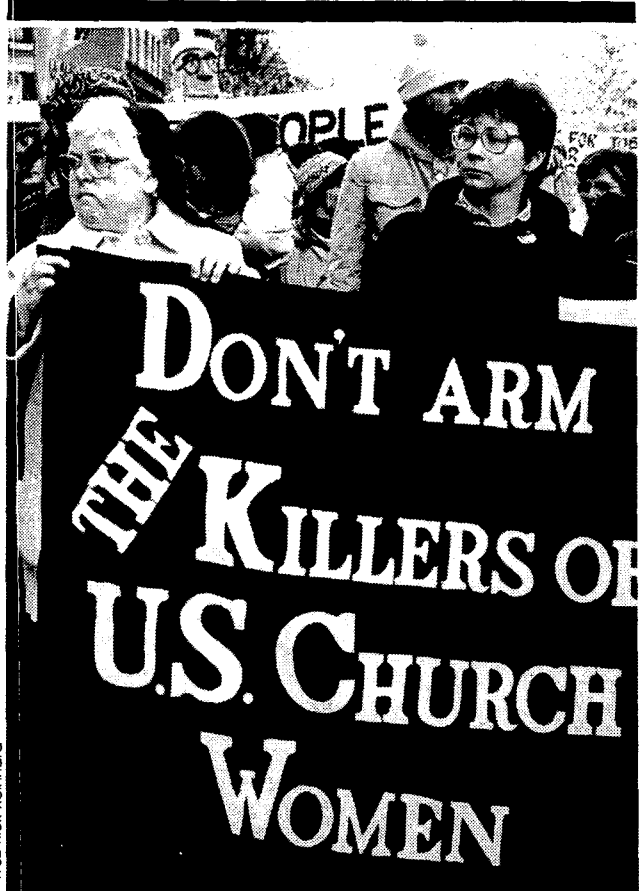
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THE INSIDE STORY



The Institute for Religion and Democracy recently attacked the Catholic Church for its growing opposition to U.S. policy in El Salvador.

Social Democrats' Christian crusade

By David Moberg

Despite a well-earned reputation as a conservative force in society, churches and religious leaders in this country have not always sanctified the establishment. Yet when they do speak out on behalf of the downtrodden and against the powers of property or the state, they can expect a vigorous attack from both political and theological conservatives within the church.

With growing church criticism of U.S. policy in El Salvador—from the national conference of Catholic bishops and from leaders of major Protestant churches, such as the Methodists, two Presbyterian denominations, the American Baptist Churches, the United Church of Christ and many others—the battle is heating up again. But this time one of the most vocal critics of the mainline churches' actions against military aid to the Salvadoran government and their criticism of the right-wing dominated regime there is a new organization called the Institute for Religion and Democracy (IRD).

Formed in April last year, the Institute brings together theologically conservative evangelicals, politically conservative religious supporters of Reagan and a number of activists from the Social Democrats, USA, the right wing of the three-way splinter of the old Socialist Party in 1972. Because the Social Democrat participants have been involved in the labor movement and liberal causes, the attacks leveled by the IRD can gain legitimacy as not coming from know-nothing right-wingers like the Moral Majority, even though the Institute's policies simply "baptize Reaganism," according to the title of an article by *Commonweal* editor Peter Steinfeld in the current issue of both *democracy* and *Christianity and Crisis*.

Besides its pamphlets on El Salvador and Nicaragua, the two most important documents from the IRD are their general policy statement, "Christianity and Democracy," and a study completed before the IRD's formation by one of its founders, David Jessup, on United Methodist contributions to political groups.

The Jessup report is in large part a smear sheet filled with innuendo and misrepresentation that portrays the United Methodists as bankrolling an international Communist conspiracy to undermine democracy. The

report starts out, "Most Methodist church-goers would react with disbelief, even anger, to be told that a significant portion of their weekly offerings were being siphoned off to groups supporting the Palestine Liberation Organization, the governments of Cuba and Vietnam, the pro-Soviet totalitarian movements of Latin America, Asia and Africa, and several violence-prone fringe groups in this country."

Disbelief might be appropriate. The total disbursements to the alleged "Marxist" organizations Jessup cited totalled one-third of one percent of the total disbursements over the period studied.

Some of the beneficiaries of Methodist funds that Jessup attacked as pro-totalitarian are The Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA), the North American Congress on Latin America, the Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy, the Riverside Church Disarmament Program, the U.S. Peace Council, Clergy and Laity Concerned, the National Lawyer's Guild's Grand Jury Project, the Middle East Research and Information Project and the Indochina Resource Center.

Such groups were dismissed by Jessup with glib and charged epithets such as "pro-Cuban," without any broad evaluation of their work and with the automatic assumption that any aid to a group that might be, among other things, sympathetic to the Cuban revolution violates Christian principles. An accumulation of carefully selected details create a distorted sense of awesome conspiracy.

For example, under the section on WOLA, a highly respected group that monitors human rights throughout the hemisphere, there is the observation: "Kay Stubbs, director of WOLA, was a participant in the 37th National Lawyers Guild Convention in San Francisco, February 15-19, 1979."

Since the United Methodists and the National Council of Churches, initially the two main targets of the IRD, had faced up to similar attacks in the past from the John Birch Society and a variety of other right-wing purveyors of anti-Communist hysteria, the Methodists commissioned an investigation of the IRD by two independent researchers.

That "counter-Jessup" report shows that the IRD itself is linked through individuals, organizational ties and contributions to a neoconservative network. Substantial funding came from two foundations that primarily support conservative causes—the Smith Richardson Foundation and the Scaife Foundation. But especially through the Social Democrats, there were links to the Reagan administration (through Carl Gershman, an aide to UN ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick), the conservative wing of the Democratic party (the Coalition for a Democratic Majority), right-wing think tanks like the Heritage Foundation, conservative religious intellectuals (such as board members Peter Berger, Richard John Neuhaus and Michael Novak), conservative evangelicals (the Good News movement within the Methodist church is a close ally) and a variety of paper organizations that support U.S. policy in El Salvador (*In These Times*, March 24).

The Social Democrats are heirs to the traditions of people like Max Schachtman, a former Socialist critic of Soviet bureaucracy who became a bitter Cold Warrior. Although liberal on domestic economic policy, they are so hostile to the Soviet Union that they share the far-right view of Soviet Communism as more dangerous than fascism (since they see fascism or other right-wing threats as having passed from the scene). For the SD's the conflict between the U.S. (the principal force for democracy) and totalitarianism (the Soviet Union and its "puppets") is by far the most important question before the world.

Although such a combination of views can find a home in parts of the labor movement, some big liberal unions were outraged by the attack on the Methodists by Jessup, who works for the AFL-CIO Committee on Political Education. Concerned that such views, which tend to make foreign policy a litmus test for political associations, could damage the coalitions that labor so desperately needs, they intervened to block the expected appointment of Jessup as assistant director of COPE early this year.

Splitting labor and churches.

The IRD assault "could conceivably make things difficult within the church and for the churches' role in the labor movement," said Betty Thompson, a staff officer in the Methodist Board of Global Ministries. "It's ironic that at a time when you'd think labor and the churches would be drawn together with all the budget cuts, there seems to be some motive for attacking the churches."

The IRD position has largely been tackled head-on rather than through criticism of the conservative network of which it is a part. The weakness is in the shared outlook itself.

As Steinfeld demonstrates, the Institute's founding document first makes the struggle of democracy against totalitarianism overshadow all other considerations in the world, then identifies totalitarianism exclusively with Marxism-Leninism, then identifies democracy with the U.S. and its form of government, then links such a government with capitalism and the market economy. There are no other political alternatives in this world view.

"When they say the truth that the church must face is the East-West confrontation and the danger of totalitarian rule, I would say it is a truth," responds Methodist Bishop James Armstrong, president of the National Council of Churches. "There are other truths that are equally ominous, such as the threat of nuclear annihilation, before which all else pales. There is also the reality of widespread hunger and poverty in the third world populations and in pockets elsewhere. The tendency of the Institute to isolate the left as the arch-enemy without giving equal attention to military dictatorships, such as Chile and Argentina, is an oversight."

The Bishop shows Christian charity in his use of "oversight." The IRD documents on El Salvador are apologies for the junta, never acknowledging the overwhelming responsibility of the military (the main force in the government) for the thousands of brutal civilian murders, denying legitimacy to the widespread Catholic involvement in the opposition, and never even mentioning in a pamphlet on the Catholic church in El Salvador the assassinated Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero, a strong critic of the government and partisan of the poor.

The IRD wants the churches to become a Christian Anti-Communist crusade, not caring that if it succeeded, such a political climate would be likely to take a heavy toll on blacks, workers, the poor and liberal causes in the U.S. as well. The IRD raises no criticism of the U.S., but the churches have insisted on a more evenhanded liberal stance. "I do not believe that the Soviet Union has a right to impose its will on Poland," Bishop Armstrong says. "By the same token, I do not believe the U.S. has a right to impose its will on El Salvador."

Although Helen McIntyre of the Methodist Board of Church and Society laments how the IRD has "brought the Cold War attitudes out of the woodwork," church leaders claim to be standing firm in the face of the neo-conservative attack. "I will listen to their criticisms," Bishop Armstrong says. "I will not be intimidated." ■

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IN THESE TIMES

U.S. wins Pyrrhic victory in Salvador



The administration was hoping that the election would defuse growing congressional opposition to its policies, and initial responses indicate that it has. But most opponents expect the administration's grace period to be short-lived.

By John Judis

TWO DAYS AFTER EL SALVADOR'S March 28 elections, a State Department official, in response to a reporter's question about the new right-wing coalition that seemed to be taking over El Salvador's government, explained apologetically that administration policymakers were still toasting the surprisingly high turnout. But when the undersecretaries and regional officers put down their champagne glasses, they may find American policy in a worse shambles than before the election.

"All the election has done is compound the problems for the administration," Council of Hemispheric Affairs director Larry Birns said. "The administration traded in a terrible situation which had stabilized—one that everyone had learned to live with—for one that is very unstable. It will only be a matter of time before any new coalition government unravels."

The administration was hoping that the election would defuse growing congressional opposition to its policies, and initial responses indicate that it has. "In the short run, the administration has psychologically gained some points," conceded Cindy Buhl, a lobbyist from the Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy. But most opponents of the administration's policy expect its grace period to be short-lived.

"In a month, people won't remember the elections," one congressional aide remarked. "They'll start thinking again about the military's violations of rights."

Scientific hypotheses do not have to be correct, but they must be verifiable. Similarly, diplomatic strategies must be predicated upon the foreseeable options. The problem with the Reagan administration's foreign policy—whether in respect to the Polish coup or the elections in El Salvador—is that it didn't anticipate what actually occurred. The administration expected that if a large turnout occurred, the Duarte administration would be returned to office. If the right won with a small turnout, then all was lost. If Duarte won with a small turnout, then negotiations were still in order. But a large turnout and a far right majority—never!

Bad planning reflects false assumptions about what the U.S. is capable of doing: in this case, a lack of clarity about what the elections could mean to the U.S. From numerous leaks and the

administration's own actions over the last year, it is possible to piece together two competing diplomatic strategies that have alternately and sometimes collectively guided the administration's policy:

- **Military victory.** After the failure of the Salvadoran guerrillas' January 1981 offensive, the administration concluded that, with sufficient military aid, the Duarte government could win a military victory. It advised the government to turn down negotiations with the Democratic Revolutionary Front and to hold elections that would legitimate continued opposition to negotiations. Elections were part of a military strategy.

- **Peace with honor.** By summer 1981, it was apparent that the guerrillas, who had adopted hit and run tactics, were far from defeated or defeatable. The guerrillas had also picked up significant diplomatic support from Mexico and France as well as from the Socialist International. At this point, the Vietnam bells seem to have rung in Secretary of State Alexander Haig's head. Haig proposed a new strategy very clearly modeled on the Nixon administration's "peace with honor" strategy in Vietnam. It consisted of intensifying and broadening the military conflict while expanding the diplomatic front in the hope of trying to divide one's adversaries. If a military victory proves impossible, then one enters negotiations with a stronger hand than the opposition.

As proposed by Haig, the Vietnam strategy consisted, on one hand, of overtures to the Soviet Union, Cuba and Nicaragua designed to weaken their allegiance to the Salvadoran rebels. (One official told the *Washington Post* that at a September 1981 meeting with Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko Haig proposed an arrangement whereby Cuba and Poland would move "to a closer relationship with their principal neighbors.") On the other hand, Haig called for increased military aid to the government in El Salvador, covert action against the Nicaraguan government and American military attempts to shut off the flow of arms to the rebels.

In this strategy the elections resembled the elections held in Saigon: They were intended to dampen opposition in the U.S. to the Duarte government while strengthening the government's hands in eventual negotiations. But there was a catch: If Duarte were beaten by a far-right opponent of negotiations, then the strategy could collapse.

It is still unclear whether the administration ever put its full force behind the

Vietnam strategy. The Pentagon clearly has balked at the possibility of a naval blockade in the Caribbean, which, according to Secretary of the Navy John Lehman, would weaken the U.S.' "ability to carry our military tasks elsewhere." The sincerity of the administration's overtures to Cuba and Nicaragua are also in question. But most foreign policy experts believe that immediately prior to the elections, with opposition from Congress and the public mounting, the administration was contemplating imminent negotiations between a newly elected Duarte government and the rebels.

Duarte's inability, however, to win a majority means that at best he will occupy a lesser place within a right-wing dominated coalition and at worst he and the Christian Democrats will be denied any participation in the government. Unless the Reagan administration can convince the previously intransigent far right to enter negotiations—a seeming impossibility—it will have either to abandon the Salvadoran government or readopt a military strategy—and risk congressional and international opposition.

American University political scientist William Leogrande, an expert on American foreign policy toward Central America, believes the U.S. will go back to a military strategy. "Just before the elections, there were signals that the administration wanted negotiations with the left," Leogrande said. "But now it looks like they are going back to their old position—believing that if they keep up the military offensive, they can win."

Crippling the administration.

Prior to the elections, the administration faced rising opposition to its policies both in Congress and the public. In Congress, 104 members signed a petition on March 4 endorsing Mexican President Lopez Portillo's peace plan. On March 11, the administration had to make a major lobbying effort in the House Subcommittee on InterAmerican Affairs to prevent a vote before the March 28 election on an amendment to the foreign aid bill that would have declared null and void the Reagan administration's certification of El Salvador's human rights record. According to law, the lack of certification would have made El Salvador automatically ineligible for further military aid.

Two bills linking further military aid to the initiation of negotiations have also been introduced. One of them, sponsored by two Republican Senators—Mark Hatfield from Oregon and Lowell Weicker

from Connecticut—and two Republican House members—James Leach from Iowa and Lawrence J. DeNardis from Connecticut—would make any further military aid depend on the Salvadoran government's willingness to enter without conditions into negotiations with the rebels.

Opponents of the administration's policy acknowledge that the election turnout has probably eliminated any chance of Congress passing a bill that would simply cut off military aid to the government. But they think that if a right-wing coalition takes power and refuses to participate in negotiations, the Hatfield-Weicker bill could stand a good chance of passage. "If a rightist coalition is formed and if it looks like they can't control the army, then you will see growing battles between Congress and the administration. The administration could find its policies crippled," one congressional aide said.

Two models.

The administration's Pyrrhic victory from the elections underscores the superficiality of its own options. As Robert Leiken, a fellow at the right-of-center Georgetown Center for Strategic and International Studies, argued recently, the U.S. has only two real options in El Salvador: a "negotiated political and economic settlement" that must include the rebels or a "regional war with profound international implications." Leiken argues that besides posing risks on its own terms, the military option would "stimulate a more militant opposition to U.S. policies in the United States, Western Europe and among the Latin American people.... Above all, such actions would facilitate rather than frustrate Soviet purposes... U.S. military actions in Central America would give credibility to Soviet propaganda that the U.S., and not the U.S.S.R., is the imperialist power and the main threat to peace."

Those on the left and right who advocate negotiations, cite the model of Zimbabwe, where all parties and armies were brought into negotiations, internationally supervised elections were held, the dreaded Marxist won and the government proceeded to align itself more closely with the West than with the Soviet Union. They argue that a similar process could take place in El Salvador and in the entire Central American region. If Margaret Thatcher made peace in Zimbabwe, they ask, why can't Ronald Reagan do the same in El Salvador?

It's a good question. ■

IN SHORT

Dressing dialectically

The word is out—the left look is in. “Poland’s Solidarity workers, American factory workers and even Italy’s Red Brigade terrorists have had roles in shaping California menswear for fall ’82. Thus has an industry that built its reputation on beachwear and jeans discovered life beyond leisure.” So says the *Los Angeles Times*, whose recent “Fashion 82” supplement carries an article titled, “Workers of the World, Gird Up.”

It seems that today’s designers will readily cut their fashions to fit this year’s conscience: “Whatever the label, the clothes are a reflection of economic and political events here and in Europe, the manufacturers say.” And when it comes to political pulse-taking, there’s no substitute for direct observation. For example, David Timsit, head of the Dweedo firm, admits that “many of his ideas have come from his scouting trips to Europe. In his travels, Timsit says, he has found young people’s attitudes and clothing indicative of ‘some sort of revolt or revolution.’ He adds that streetwear there has been influenced by a variety of sources such as the Red Brigades and Polish workers.”

Timsit is confident that the Euroleft look will catch on in the U.S. “People are upset, people are frustrated, people are disgusted, and I think it shows up in their clothing,” he asserts. (For the fall, his firm is offering a six-pocket vest that matches gold-colored pants with a contrasting leg stripe.) But Ken Carroll, vice president of sales for Roland sportswear, eschews disgust and frustration in advocating a cooler “industrial look.” “I’m convinced,” says Carroll, “that the hard industrial look shows that people are more concerned with function than with pure fashion. The survival look is part of the ’80s. Times are tough now, and the clothes reflect that.”

Coming in for the code

Last month the Nestle Corporation, the world’s largest supplier of infant formula, announced new “comprehensive policy guidelines” on its marketing of the product, which can cause malnutrition and death when used improperly. According to the *Multinational Monitor*, the Swiss company will restrict its use of free samples and educational materials. It will also alter infant-formula labels to conform to the World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines, which prohibit aggressive promotion of breastmilk substitutes.

At a meeting between Nestle officials and UNICEF representatives in February, the *Monitor* reports, the company “admitted” that it had “room for considerable improvement” in its marketing practices. The government of Zimbabwe agrees, charging Nestle with violating the WHO code “at the expense of the Zimbabwean people.” And a recent report by the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility claims that Nestle has also broken the code in the Dominican Republic, Nigeria, Mexico, the Philippines, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Kenya, Mozambique, India, Greece and Peru.

Let the seller beware

Defense contractors, PNS Radio reports, are busy these days developing new American weapons to combat old American weapons. The Pentagon is finding that its open-handed arms sales policy has backfired in some cases, as countries purchase advanced American arms and then turn against the U.S. It is said that one reason the U.S. didn’t blockade Iran during the hostage crisis, for example, was the presence of more than 200 sophisticated anti-ship missiles purchased by the Shah. Iran, along with more than 20 other countries, also has advanced missiles that are effective against U.S. planes. And with the Reagan administration stepping up its arms sales abroad, one military electronics expert at the TRW Corporation says, “the problem can’t do anything but get worse.”

Beyond Monopoly

According to the *Wall Street Journal*, a huge, worldwide nuclear war game was “secretly directed from the White House during the first five days of March.” This is what happened on the fourth day of a simulated nuclear crisis, after hundreds of Soviet missiles had struck the U.S.: “The president died where he was sitting, in the cramped ‘Situation Room’ beneath the White House. Instantaneously, command over the nation’s remaining civilian and military resources shifted to his successor as a nuclear strike was called to retaliate. Meanwhile, critical functions of the federal government continued, operating from hundreds of locations scattered throughout the U.S.”

Exciting, huh? President Reagan certainly thought so. The exercise convinced him that the nation is well capable of keeping the government running during a nuclear strike. Officials said they were discussing the game with the press partly “to make sure that the other side is aware that we have the capability.” They say the simulation involved the movement of more than a thousand civilian and military players throughout the world. The event was code-named “Ivy League”—an appropriate title, because it seems that all the administration cares about is getting into a nuclear war, not what happens later.

—Josh Kornbluth



Nearly 50,000 marched in Washington to protest the Haig's-eye view of Central America.

A Salvador rally in the winter of our discontent

WASHINGTON—As winter edged rather warily into spring on March 27, a crowd of nearly 50,000 marched in Washington to protest the Reagan administration’s support for the junta in El Salvador. Arriving from as far away as Chicago, Boston and Atlanta, the marchers gathered in Malcolm X Park to launch a march and rally called by the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES) and organized under the banner of the March 27 Coalition.

Events at the demonstration seemed to mirror the growing sentiment against involvement in El Salvador that cuts across ethnic, religious, class and regional boundaries. Mary Ann Mahaffey, a member of the Detroit City Council, presented the Seal of the City of Detroit to Arnaldo Ramos, a representative of the Democratic Revolutionary Front (FDR) of El Salvador. “The resolution to oppose U.S. intervention in El Salvador passed the City Council unanimously,” Mahaffey told *In These Times*. “I think we have to continue making the connection between unemployment and the budget cuts and the rise in military spending and intervention in places like El Salvador.”

Ramos, who travels widely in the U.S. on behalf of the FDR, said, “I think the people of El Salvador know that the people of the United States oppose U.S. government policy in Central America. This demonstration is terribly important in terms of American public opinion.” Bearing out Ramos’ point, the *Washington Post* released a poll last month in which 72 percent of those interviewed were opposed to U.S. intervention in El Salvador.

With support for the rally ranging from Ted Kennedy (he sent a statement) to the Worker’s World Party-led People’s Anti-War Mobilization, the chilly speechfest was relatively free of left factionalism. Ramos acknowledged to *In These Times* that the FDR lobbied behind the scenes for unity among the various U.S. support groups taking

up the Salvadoran cause.

As the march wound its way from Malcolm X Park to Connecticut Avenue and down to the White House, a general atmosphere of support prevailed along the route. One woman bystander commented, “I don’t demonstrate. I don’t like to. But the U.S. has no business in other countries, either.” A man in a camper with West Virginia plates sitting at a stoplight for what must have been an hour did not seem terribly perturbed. He raised his fist in salute to the crowd as they marched past his vehicle.

—A. Lin Neumann

Demonstrators dramatize President Jose Napoleon Duarte’s hold on the poor of El Salvador.



Like Thatcher, like Reagan

Kevin Phillips is the E.F. Hutton of the New Right. When he makes predictions, politicians—on the left and the right—listen. In 1969, Phillips wrote *The Emerging Republican Majority*, which, on the basis of Richard Nixon and George Wallace’s combined majority in the 1968 election, predicted the emergence of a

white, conservative electoral majority in the U.S., based in the Sunbelt and among Northern urban ethnics. The 1972 presidential results made Phillips appear to be a prophet, even though Republicans failed to win majorities in the House or Senate. But Watergate, which brought a Democratic avalanche in 1974, seemed to destroy his thesis. Phillips subsequently argued that if Watergate had not occurred, John Connally, running as the Republican presidential candidate, would have solidified the new majority in 1976.

The 1980 results would appear to have vindicated Phillips again, but he has proved surprisingly reluctant to cast his lot with the pollsters and party officials who saw in the Republican sweep of the presidency and the Senate a GOP realignment com-

parable to the 1932-36 Democratic realignment. In a speech at a fall conference of the Free Congress Research and Education Foundation, Phillips expressed his doubts about the new majority.

Phillips, following the lead of political scientist Walter Dean Burnham, now believes that a process of “dealignment”—in which parties themselves become less important in elections, and voters become increasingly fickle and disinterested—has overtaken any prospect for a realignment. “We’ve seen all the statis-

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tics that were issued for a creeping alignment," Phillips said. "Well, the creep hasn't been updated too much recently, because it's turned into a reverse creep as Reaganomics bites."

Phillips draw a parallel between the Reagan administration and Margaret Thatcher's administration. "My feeling is that the Republican job in the polls is following the pattern...of Margaret Thatcher's situation with the Conservative Party in the United Kingdom. After Thatcher was in for about six to eight months, it was very clear that the Conservative Party was losing its initial headway in the polls, that Margaret Thatcher was losing her job approval rating, that the shift was moving away from public focus on inflation toward public focus on the incredible bank rates and an unemployment which was gathering force."

Phillips, who coined the term "New Right" in a 1975 column and advocated the New Right emphasis on social issues, doesn't believe that the social concerns are going "to be the issue in 1982. The issue is going to be Thatcherized Reaganomics."

—John Judis

Chicago O.K.s disarming law

CHICAGO—This city, notorious for its shoot-'em-up gangster past, has become one of a small but growing number of American municipalities to enact a curb on handgun ownership. On March 19, the City Council voted 30-11 to approve an ordinance that freezes the number of legally registered handguns in Chicago at the current level of 430,000. In addition, owners of already registered firearms will be required to re-register them every two years and pay a \$5 fee.

Chicago's clampdown on handguns, which was opposed during several weeks of hearings by gun owners' groups and some representatives of the black community, follows the lead of two other Illinois cities. East St. Louis, a predominantly black community of 55,000 in the southern part of the state, banned the sale of handguns in December and made it an offense to possess one outside the home. The Chicago suburb of Morton Grove went one step further by banning handguns altogether (*In These Times*, Feb. 17). Several other Illinois towns are also considering handgun bans.

But the mounting success of local gun-control activists in Illinois might be nullified on the state level. A state legislator has tacked on a zoning-bill amendment that would deny municipalities the right to regulate firearms.

In San Francisco, a ban on handguns proposed by mayor Dianne Feinstein might be defused for similar reasons. An existing California law stipulates that only the state is allowed to register or license firearms. If the ordinance is passed by the city's supervisors, it will be up to the California courts to determine if the state law applies to an outright ban.

Handgun bans are being discussed in Palo Alto and Santa

Monica, but officials in those cities probably won't take any definite action until the legality of San Francisco's proposed ordinance has been ruled on. Montgomery, Ala., is also debating a handgun ban proposed by a black alderman after the recent shooting of a policewoman there.

—Jay Walljasper

New tenants, old buildings



Squatters move into an abandoned Philadelphia house.

PHILADELPHIA—When Rhonda Brody turned 30 last month, she got a long-overdue gift—a place to live. Along with Brody, whose family had been forced out of a nearby housing project by federal budget cuts, members of the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) ripped away the corrugated sheet metal covering the doorway of an abandoned house and marched in. Brody, a welfare recipient with three children, was one of 75 "squatters" who moved into houses in North and South Philadelphia on March 20. "I've finally got a home," she told the crowd of 400 cheering ACORN supporters. "And I intend to stay."

ACORN's renewed squatting drive, begun here last fall, was accompanied by squatting actions in seven major cities across the country. At the beginning of the rally, it was announced that 183 squatters had taken possession that day of buildings in St. Louis, Detroit, Boston, Pittsburgh, Tulsa and Atlanta. More squats are planned for April. Buoyed by the reports, the squatters began their march chanting spirituals and waving signs of protest. The police showed up at one point, but left quietly as the swelling crowd moved through the streets from one house to the next.

The squatting movement, fueled by the deepening recession and federal housing cutbacks, is fast becoming an important symbol of the growing desperation—and militancy—of the poor. As abandonment and foreclosure reach record levels, many low- and moderate-income people are finding it more and more difficult to secure decent, affordable housing.

Rhonda Brody now has a home, but she and her co-squatters still face the task for rehabilitating a somewhat dilapidated row house. She is confident, though, that with the help of sympathetic neighbors and friendly contractors the job will get done. "We're all in this together," she said. "We'll pull through."

—Peter Howell

Briefing: An OSHA without teeth

Remember the Stop OSHA gang? For much of the '70s, these New Rightists waged a lonely campaign to abolish the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, which they saw as a totalitarian scourge on American free enterprise. So where are they, now that "regulatory relief" has become not just respectable, but central to the Reagan agenda?

Orrin Hatch (R-Utah), who often vowed to repeal the OSHAct, now chairs the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee, where he could easily launch such a move. But today he praises OSHA for giving the law "a new lease on life." Why? Because Hatch likes what Reagan appointees have done to reverse the agency's "adversarial" stance. In 1981 with some well-placed budget cuts, staff reductions and policy directives—OSHA turned in its worse enforcement record in years:

- total inspections—down 18 percent
- follow-up inspections—down 73 percent
- serious citations—down 37 percent
- willful citations—down 80 percent
- fines—down 65 percent
- backlog of unanswered complaints—up 121 percent

OSHA has never had enough inspectors to visit more than 1-2 percent of the nation's workplaces each year, so the administration's 29 percent cutback in its compliance staff may seem insignificant. But other, qualitative changes in enforcement are clearly far-reaching.

"To be effective, we must target our resources to concentrate our efforts where the serious hazards are," says OSHA head Thorne Auchter. Accordingly, the agency has stopped inspecting employers who claim better-than-average rates of

low-workday accidents.

In fact, OSHA's policy has always been to "target" high-hazard industries and worksites. The difference is that the Reagan administration, for the first time, has granted formal exemptions from inspection to an estimated 86 percent of manufacturing firms. "What they did," explains AFL-CIO industrial hygienist Peg Seminario, "was to give away one of the biggest trump cards in the whole enforcement process, and that is the threat of the OSHA inspector showing up and doing the inspection of that workplace."

Workers can no longer count on an automatic inspection when they file complaints about unsafe or unhealthful conditions. Under a new policy, OSHA will respond only if it believes that "a violation threatening physical harm or imminent danger exists." How can it make such a determination without visiting the workplace? By phoning the employer, of course, and requesting voluntary compliance.

Auchter believes that the benefits of "cooperation, not confrontation," outweigh the risks of alerting management to the possibility of an inspection. Under the OSHAct, for any individual to provide such a tip is a criminal offense.

Still more exemptions from inspections are planned—under the new STAR (Sharing the Accountability for Regulation program)—for companies that maintain joint labor-management programs to oversee safety and health. Yet few unions have jumped at the chance to trade scheduled OSHA inspections for an advisory voice on a committee without formal powers.

What if labor won't cooperate? Apparently, the administration has thought of that—PRAISE (Positive Results

Achieved in Safe Employment) and PRIME (Positive Results through Intensive Management Efforts) would exempt employers whose voluntary programs feature no worker participation.

If any aggressive inspectors remain after a year of the Reagan OSHA, a new pilot program should help root them out. Each employer is being asked to fill out a report card rating inspectors on such qualities as competence, courtesy and impartiality. A typical question: "Did the OSHA Compliance Officer explain your right to contest findings when finalized by the Area Director?" As an afterthought (with labor attacking the scheme), a separate questionnaire has been developed for union reps.

Auchter's deputy, Mark Cowan, denies that any "chilling effect" on inspectors has resulted. Enthusiastic about the program, he says that "responses from employers have been superb. We're hearing, 'Wow, this guy is really here to help me, for a change.'" And the workers' reports? "Most employee representatives don't care," he laments. "They just throw them in the garbage."

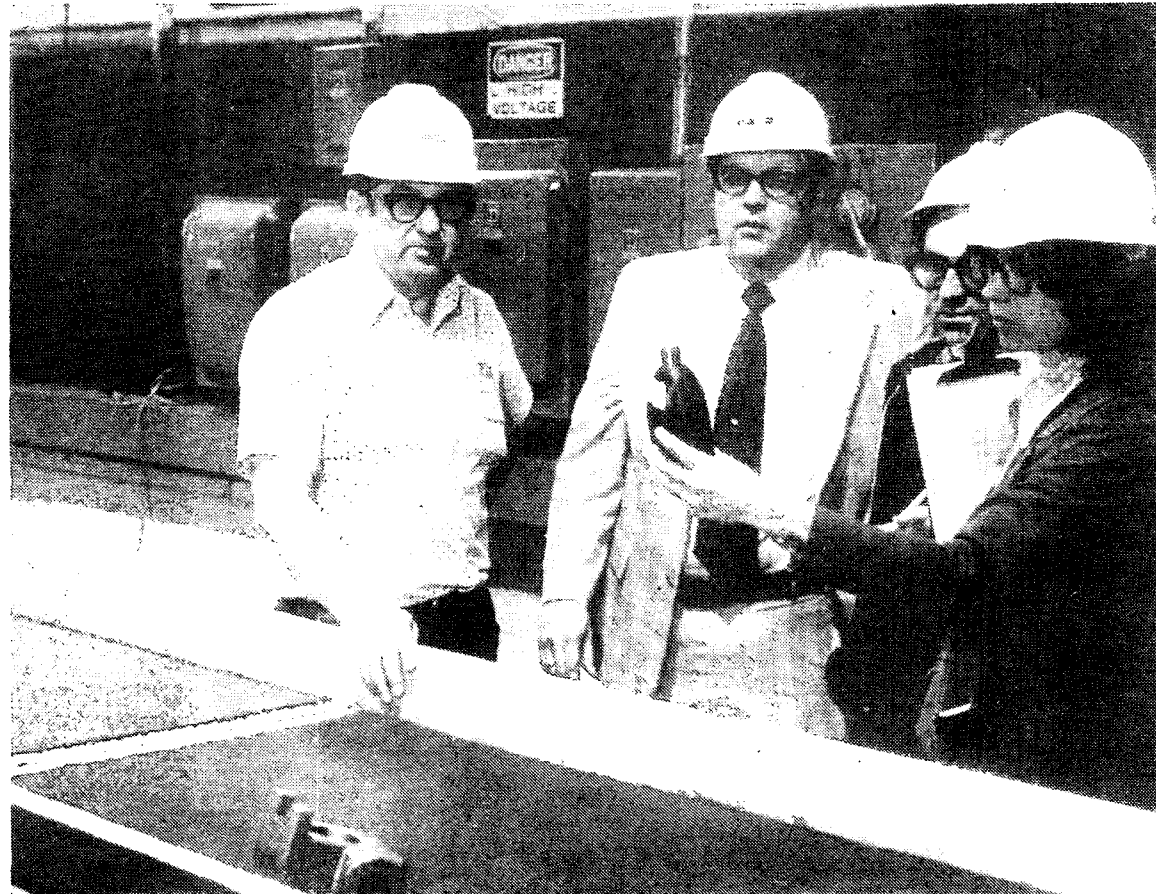
In the past 15 months, OSHA has won lots of new allies in the business community. But even there, not all agree on the wisdom of gutting enforcement. "I don't think anyone is scared of OSHA anymore," one corporate safety director told *Engineering News Record*, a construction industry journal. "When a man is killed on the worksite or a safety program is given only lip service by jobsite management, they get their hand slapped with a \$500 fine."

A western contractor added: "They are much more cooperative—to the point of being ineffective."

—James Crawford

James Crawford is a freelance writer and the editor of *Survival Kit*, a job safety and health newsletter in Boston.

Under a new OSHA policy, workers can no longer count on an automatic inspection when they complain about workplace conditions.



IN THE NATION

POLITICS

High black turnout re-elects Morial

By Monte Piliawsky

NEW ORLEANS

ON MARCH 20, ERNEST DUTCH Morial, often labeled the country's most "conservative" black mayor, was re-elected mayor of New Orleans. In a runoff, Morial defeated his hard-line, crime-fighting white opponent State Representative Ron Faucheux by a 53.2 to 46.8 percent margin. In his surprisingly decisive victory, Morial received 98 percent of the black vote and 16 percent of the white vote. The key to the mayor's triumph was a near-record 75 percent turnout of black voters, slightly higher than the white voter turnout rate.

Morial's re-election campaign stressed his success in economic development and fiscal management, in a scandal-free administration. His opponent, 31-year-old Faucheux, ran on the single issue of crime, using dramatic TV spots to exploit white fear of black crime, but addressing other issues like city finances and transit enough to avoid the demagogue label.

The campaign was almost exclusively geared to a small number of middle- and upper-income whites because of the perception that this bloc of voters would determine the election outcome. The two candidates virtually ignored the largest group in New Orleans—poor blacks. Except for the issues of jobs and police brutality, no prominent concerns of blacks were even discussed in the campaign.

In the Feb. 6 first primary election, Morial led Faucheux 46.9 to 45.4 percent, but did not win a majority because a second black candidate, State Senator William Jefferson, polled 7 percent of the total votes. Two reasons probably accounted for Morial's becoming New Orleans' first incumbent elected mayor in the 20th century not to win re-election in the first primary. First, Faucheux's anti-crime campaign struck a responsive chord with white voters. In fact, the legislator received 79 percent of the white vote (compared to 1 percent of black votes), as his subtle racial campaign conjured up an image of black thugs in the minds of many white votes. Second, Sen. Jefferson's candidacy probably siphoned off enough votes for Morial to deny the mayor the victory.

A long list of firsts.

Morial, a 52-year-old Creole, defies quick definition. In 1977, Morial was elected New Orleans' first black mayor, receiving 51.6 percent of the vote against a conservative white opponent who during the campaign had referred to blacks as "jungle bunnies." Morial's mayoral victory followed the usual long list of "firsts" during his political career—first black graduate of LSU Law School, first black elected to the state legislature since Reconstruction and first black elected to the State Appeals Court. Apparently an indefatigable man who thrives on 15-hour work days, Morial uniquely occupies a leading position in both black and white New Orleans society. A board member of Tulane University whose children attend Ivy League colleges, Morial was one of the first blacks invited to the elite Mardi Gras balls.

Not surprisingly, in his 1977 mayoral election Morial received the support of leaders of the white business community as well as endorsement from the New Orleans daily newspaper. As mayor, Morial immediately displayed his conservative temperament when a group of black youths stormed city hall demanding more summer jobs. Far from promising them

additional government jobs, the mayor advised the protestors to seek jobs in private industry. "Get up early, put on a clean white shirt and go out looking for jobs," he said. "And if you don't get one, go back the next day."

Limits on mayors.

The 1982 New Orleans mayoral campaign dramatizes three emerging trends in black urban politics:

- the severe legal and economic limitations on black mayors, exacerbated by President Reagan's "New Federalism";
- increasing alliances between black mayors and white corporate elites in programs of economic development; and
- competition among black candidates—a reflection of widening economic cleavages within the black community.

A decade ago, in referring to the shift in black strategy from direct mass action to the acquisition of political power, Mervyn Dymally, then-lieutenant governor of California, said, "Politics is now the cutting edge of the civil rights movement." But the new focus on electoral politics has revealed that black mayors are limited in what they can do to improve the plight of their black constituency. Cities governed by blacks rank as the poorest cities in the nation—they have the oldest housing, the largest migration of white population to the suburbs and, as a result of both, the lowest capacity to raise revenues from their own taxes.

Like most cities, New Orleans faces a spiraling dilemma of growing demands and shrinking revenues. But the situation in New Orleans is particularly urgent. In 1978, Morial presided over a city that depended upon state and federal funds for half of its \$214 million operating budget. Because of a homestead exemption provision in the state constitution, only 10 percent of New Orleans' homeowners pay any property tax. New Orleans was a city on the federal dole, with severely limited local options for generating revenue, and the dole was being cut off.

In his first year in office, Morial proposed a sweeping series of revenue measures. Two of these—a flat \$100 tax on property and a \$50 tax on automobiles—were eventually approved by the City Council. But the taxes, euphemistically called "service charges," were so unpopular that the council repealed them last year, immediately after voters had approved a half-cent sales tax increase for the city. Morial's tax program was widely thought to seal his fate as a one-term mayor.

Early in his administration, Morial

When blacks demanded jobs, Morial told them to get up early and put on a clean white shirt.

procured \$32.5 million in federal funds to replace buses that were more than 15 years old. But with the advent of New Federalism, New Orleans' transit service faces an imminent \$19 million shortfall. During the 1982 mayoral runoff campaign, Morial begrudgingly proposed that a referendum for a one-cent sales



Mayor Ernest Dutch Morial

tax be held next month to avert a shutdown of the entire transit operation. So, New Orleans' poor blacks face a cruel Catch-22: Should it raise the sales tax rate to 8 percent, one of the highest in the country, or should it do without bus service?

Throughout the U.S. black mayors—notably Maynard Jackson, Coleman Young and Kenneth Gibson—have made corporate investment the keystone to their urban development strategies. In his January mayoral inauguration address, Andrew Young emphasized seeking private capital for the city's economy. But, as *Black Enterprise* magazine wrote in October 1980, "No black mayor in the country is more committed to black economic ambitions through alliance with corporate capital than Ernest Morial, in New Orleans."

Under Morial's direction, New Orleans' booming economy has reached its peak level since the 1850s. Among the highlights of 1981 alone were the start of three significant projects: construction of a \$93 million exhibition hall, planning the 1984 New Orleans World's Fair and development of a 7,000-acre industrial district on previously neglected land. The mayor has maximized the city's

short-term economic growth and has begun laying groundwork for long-term industrial development. But the large black underclass in New Orleans has remained untouched by the city's economic boom.

According to a study just released by Daniel C. Thompson, professor emeritus of sociology at Dillard University, two-thirds of the black community in New Orleans lives at or near the poverty level and nearly one-third of the city's black labor force remains unemployed or underemployed. Unless drastic improvements are made in New Orleans' public schools, newly created jobs will be taken by workers from out of town. But because of the city's narrow tax base from which the public schools derive their revenue, New Orleans spends just over half per pupil what is spent by other major U.S. cities.

Black votes for black mayors.

Historically, blacks have rallied behind a single candidate—black or white—as their hope. Sometimes the results have been the election of white moderates, as in the 1960 and 1976 presidential elections. But in recent years, black voters have increasingly elected black mayors. The growing phenomenon of urban elections in which two black candidates oppose each other reflects the continued widening of the income gap between poor blacks and middle-class blacks. As civil rights leader John Lewis noted in January, "The black community is no longer monolithic"; it is becoming polarized along economic lines.

The recent Atlanta mayoral election illustrates this trend. In the Oct. 27 primary, Young led white moderate Sidney Marcus 40.9 to 38.8 percent, while H. Reginald Eaves, a black who represented the voices of poor blacks, polled 15.9 percent of the vote. Eaves endorsed Young in the runoff and apparently delivered his votes, because Young won with 55 percent—exactly the black proportion of the registered voters.

Under Morial, construction has boomed in New Orleans, but two out of three blacks live at or near the poverty level.

Many observers suggest that the specter of two black candidates in the Atlanta election divided the black community and potentially jeopardized the election of a black mayor. While the risk was minimized because blacks comprise a majority of the registered voters in Atlanta (the city is 66 percent black), this "safeguard" does not exist in most other U.S. cities, where blacks are a minority of the registered voters. In addition, the historical voting pattern of greatly reduced black voter turnout in runoff elections further threatens the chances of black candidates, who are forced into second elections because of the candidacy of black opponents.

This year's New Orleans mayoral election is an opportunity to weigh the costs and benefits of the black electorate of

Continued on page 10

IMMIGRATION

ASYLUM
FOR
HAITIANS

Haitians jam the gears at INS

By Thomas Brom

M I A M I

IT'S THREE IN THE MORNING IN Miami's torn-up downtown, and no time to be on the streets. The nation's most expensive urban renewal program looks like a war zone at night, and anybody who reads the papers knows this city has the highest murder rate in the country.

But already a line is beginning to form along the front wall of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) building—a line of young boys barely old enough for a paper route. They are earning \$20-\$30 each, proxies for immigration lawyers who must get one of the first hundred numbers every day to make it past the front door.

"Sure, it's crazy," says Ira Kurzban, an immigration attorney representing the Haitian Refugee Center, Inc. (HRC, Inc.) in Miami's Little Haiti. "But the INS bureaucracy is swamped with cases. I'm already working seven days a week without getting up at 3 a.m. to stand in line. So I pay."

Since 1977, Kurzban has represented hundreds of Haitian refugees before administrative law judges of the INS and federal district courts in South Florida. He has donated more than a thousand hours of time, forgoing a huge sum in potential legal fees over the past five years. And, along with a handful of immigration lawyers in the Miami area, he has become an enormous pain in the ass to the U.S. government.

The Reagan administration is now engaged in a multi-faceted battle against refugees from the Caribbean and Central America—a battle that it expects to win, but one that is going badly just the same. Lawyers in Miami, New York, Puerto Rico, Washington, D.C., and at every detention center where Haitians are kept have insisted on due process for their clients at every step of asylum hearings. They have also insisted that the government is making foreign policy—not dispensing justice—through its administration of the INS. And as the class-action suits multiply around the country on behalf of Haitian and Salvadoran refugees, they are throwing so much sand in the INS machinery that "exclusionary" proceedings are grinding to a halt.

At the center of the controversy are some 80,000 Haitian refugees who have landed on the shores of South Florida since 1978. Fleeing the Duvalier dictatorship at home, they are among some 600,000 Haitians now scattered through the Dominican Republic, the Bahamas and the rest of the Caribbean. In spring and summer, when the winds are right, they can reach Miami in small wooden boats.

"There is a policy behind the detention of Haitian refugees," says University of Miami law professor Bruce Winick, co-counsel in an HRC Inc. class-action suit

seeking release of the 3,100 Haitians still held in about a dozen camps around the country. "INS claims it is dealing with each refugee on an individual basis. But before Reagan's crackdown last spring, most refugees were released into the community." Since then, they have been held at the Krome Avenue detention center near the Everglades, or shipped to upstate New York.

The Miami lawsuit got a tremendous boost earlier in the month when a New York federal judge ordered the release of eight Haitians from a Brooklyn detention center. Judge Robert Carter found that the INS "denied parole to petitioners because they were black and/or because they were Haitians."

Although the decision has no formal effect in the South Florida federal district, it supports the HRC Inc. contention that a "policy" exists within INS, and that the Reagan administration changed that policy toward Haitians without following steps required by the federal Administrative Procedures Act.

Judge Carter's decision is the latest in a long line of successful appeals brought against the administrative practices of the INS. Kurzban, Winick and others won a landmark decision known as *Haitian Refugee Center v. Civiletti* in July 1980. In that case, Judge James King found that "INS officials decided to ship all Haitians back to Haiti simply because their continued presence in the U.S. had become a problem. The manner in which INS treated the more than 4,000 Haitian plaintiffs violated the Constitution, the immigration statutes, international agreements, INS regulations and INS operating instructions. It must stop."

Judge King ordered the INS to submit a plan for the orderly, fair, case-by-case reprocessing of asylum claims, but the government appealed his ruling. A year later, Federal District Judge Alcee Hastings stepped in to halt what Winick called "the lawless disregard for the Haitians' rights." INS judges were holding simultaneous hearings in a subdivided trailer at Camp Krome, while harried attorneys for the Haitians rushed from room to room. Hastings issued a temporary restraining order stopping all deportation proceedings and days later the INS announced it was suspending hearings against all Haitians not properly represented by an attorney.

By the end of 1981, the administrative machinery of the INS had essentially been halted by three Haitian Refugee Center Inc. attorneys—Kurzban, Forester and Vera Weisz—representing nearly 600 clients at the Krome Avenue detention center. Because of their efforts, only 11 Haitians were deported prior to last July and none have been deported since then.

Reagan strikes back.

The Reagan administration, meanwhile, was well aware of the effect a few attorneys were having on the INS. In late summer, the government proposed its new

immigration law, hoping to short-circuit the federal court appeals that were taking as long as two years. The Omnibus Immigration Control Act—now being debated by Sen. Alan Simpson's (R-Wyo.) immigration subcommittee in Congress—would deny the legal right to apply for asylum to any alien entering the country without "documentation"—a U.S. visa. Instead, each case would be reviewed by a newly created "asylum officer" who could make an on-the-spot decision to send the would-be refugee back home. That decision could not be appealed to the courts.

At the same time late last summer, the administration announced its Coast Guard interdiction program in the Windward Passage off Haiti. Under the Rea-

By the end of 1981, the administrative machinery of the INS had essentially been halted by three attorneys representing 600 clients at Florida's Krome Avenue detention center.

gan plan, adjudication of the Haitians' claim to asylum would occur aboard ship, presumably en route back to Haiti, despite United Nations guidelines and international protocol requiring hearings before return.

Editorials in many U.S. papers—including both Miami dailies—ridiculed the proposal. But the administration pressed forward. As if conditions weren't bad enough at the existing refugee camps, the INS announced plans to send Haitians to the closest thing to Siberia in the U.S.: Two new camps, if needed, were proposed for Haitian and Cuban refugees—a wind-swept abandoned bomber base in Glasgow, Mont., and a World War II barracks at Fort Drum, N.Y.

Then in February, Vice President George Bush announced creation of the Cabinet-level task force on South Florida's Crime, Drug Smuggling and Illegal Immigration. Speaking in Miami this month, Bush said, "I can report that the Secretary of the Navy has authorized the use of U.S. Navy warships—I repeat, U.S. Navy warships—to help the Coast Guard interdict ships smuggling drugs or carrying illegal aliens into Florida." He also promised Army Cobra helicopters, additional Coast Guard cutters and nearly 200 more federal agents.

Finally, the Reagan administration acted behind the scenes to defuse militant support in Miami's Little Haiti for the 600 detainees still in Camp Krome. Within days of a riot and mass escape from the center last December, the Justice Department sent agents of the Community Relations Service (CRS) to Little Haiti, a crowded corner of northeast Miami

housing about 25,000 immigrants. The INS also announced plans to spend \$900,000 on renovations to "improve" the living conditions at Krome.

A new Miami community group soon emerged—the Krome Liaison Committee—supported by the CRS team and tied to a downtown civic organization. The Committee quickly gained INS permission to monitor conditions at Krome, replacing a coalition of Haitian support groups that included HRC Inc. That coalition had toured the camp in late January and called for shutting it down.

The prevailing winds.

By all outward appearances, the administration's shotgun attack on the Haitians is working. A Coast Guard cutter is turning back boats off Cap Haitien. Only 43 Haitians were caught on Florida beaches last December, compared to 550 in the same month a year before. Little Haiti seems quiet. And in Washington, Sen. Simpson hopes to report out the Reagan immigration bill this summer.

But there are other powerful forces working to frustrate the administration's best laid plans. Not the least of these is the continuing belief in the Bill of Rights in federal court. In January, Assistant U.S. Attorney Richard Marshall, the lawyer charged with defending INS policy in the Miami lawsuit to free the Haitians, quit suddenly. "I found I was asserting precisely the opposite of what I believed the Haitians were entitled to," he said.

And Marshall is not alone. Among the witnesses called by Kurzban last week to testify in favor of releasing the Haitians were Charles Gordon and Sam Bersen—both former chief counsels for the INS—and Larry Mahoney, until recently the public relations director at Camp Krome. Mahoney now charges there is a pattern of discrimination against the Haitians.

A second important factor is public outrage at INS procedures toward the Haitians, even in places like Miami where

sympathy for new immigrants is hard to find. "The attitudes in this city changed overnight when those 33 bodies washed up on the beach last year," says Lynn Meyer, director of Research for Social Change and chief administrator of a Cuban refugee camp.

The Catholic Church has been particularly supportive of Haitian refugees. Last week the U.S. Catholic Conference offered to sponsor all 2,100 Haitians still in detention.

A third factor, giving considerable strength to the Haitian cause, is the sudden influx of refugees seeking asylum from dictatorships in Central America. Because most of the refugees from El Salvador and Guatemala are coming to the West Coast, a second team of immigration attorneys is being drawn into the struggle. Already meetings have been held between East and West Coast lawyers to coordinate strategy.

Ultimately, the biggest ally of the Haitian refugees won't be U.S. attorneys or other refugees but the drive for social and political revolution at home. In the short term, more and more Haitians will probably be arriving on U.S. shores. "A few ships in the Windward Passage aren't going to stop the Haitians once the trade winds shift in April," Meyer says. But in the long term—as three recent invasion attempts off the Haitian mainland have shown—the dictatorship of Jean-Claude Duvalier cannot last.

"My only sorrow is that these invasions were not planned better," the Rev. Jean-Juste says. "We will survive Duvalier as we survived his father—and we will survive the Reagan administration." ■



Paul Comstock

MASS TRANSIT

Reagan to riders: the bus stops here

By Jay Walljasper

THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION'S transportation policy—just like its tax, health, education and welfare programs—is designed to hurt the people that most need help. The elderly, the poor, blacks, Hispanics, young people, inner city residents, women and inhabitants of the Frost Belt make up the bulk of public transit ridership, and under President Reagan's proposed transportation budget they will have to endure higher fares, longer waits and reduced service hours.

After cutting federal mass transit aid 32 percent last year, Reagan now wants to eliminate all operating subsidies given to local mass transit systems by 1985. The \$1.8 billion subsidy program is on the chopping block because the administration wants to avoid paying local transit costs—especially what it considers "poorly negotiated" labor contracts. In addition, capital grants to transit systems—federal money available to buy new equipment—will also be trimmed because of Reagan's iron-plated determination to raise defense spending at the same time as cutting taxes.

Transit officials across the country say these reductions, if approved by Congress, will mean drastic cutbacks in service, fare hikes and, in some cities, the end of the line for public transportation. A fall 1981 survey of 116 transit systems conducted by the American Transit Association found that nearly a quarter of them might face extinction in the next five years without federal operating subsidies—including systems in Little Rock, Harrisburg, Peoria, Chattanooga, El Paso, Knoxville and Scranton, Pa. Also, 67 percent of the transit systems surveyed said they would have to reduce service if Reagan's cuts are carried out and 89 percent would be forced to raise fares.

But the example of Birmingham, Ala., indicates that fare hikes and service cuts only make matters worse for financially strapped transit systems. Birmingham's problems began in November 1980 when the price of a bus ride jumped from 60 to 80 cents and 8 percent of weekday service was chopped out. By February 1981, the transit system had 15 percent fewer riders and a revenue shortfall of \$800,000. When local and state officials refused to aid the system, bus service stopped.

"It was chaos for a while," recalls Frank Martin, general manager of the Birmingham-Jefferson County Transit Authority. "Some people just didn't make trips and others had to buy a cheap

car to get through it or share rides."

With the money saved during three months without operation, Birmingham was able to put buses back on the streets June 1, but with another 37 percent reduction in service. Ridership is now 18,000 passengers a day—half of what it was in 1980. If federal operating subsidies are eliminated, it will mean that Birmingham bus riders must brace themselves for the second part of a brutal one-two punch.

"Unless we get additional funding," Martin says, "the loss of federal funds will mean another 22 percent cut in service in 1984, and 24 percent in 1985."

New federalism woes.

To avoid scaling down Birmingham's bus system to almost nothing, Martin hopes that local property taxes can be increased to help pay for the transit system. That is the crux of Reagan's "New Federalism" scheme—let local and state government take up the slack in funding essential social services such as public transit. But Reagan's plan ignores the impact that local political factors have on the administration of public services—factors such as race in Alabama.

"Transit is a black-white issue in Birmingham," Martin says. "Ninety-five percent of our riders are black, and people perceive that it only benefits blacks and underprivileged people. It's seen as an extension of welfare."

Local and state funding of mass transit also gets caught in the political crossfire between urban and rural interests. In Illinois, where the Chicago-downstate rivalry colors almost every political decision, state legislators cheerfully fund

downstate transit systems and highway projects. But last year, when Chicago's Regional Transportation Authority, which gets no state aid, faced a shut-down because of financial problems, the state refused to bail it out. Instead, service was cut back and fares were boosted to 90 cents.

In Tennessee, things are even worse. For several years a rural-dominated state legislature has refused to allow Memphis to levy a local gasoline tax to aid its ailing bus system. Fares in Memphis have already climbed to 85 cents, and transit officials will meet sometime this month to consider shutting down the system.

The notion of New Federalism also fails to take into account that hard-hit cities are hit even harder by the loss of federal funds for public services. Youngstown, Ohio—already reeling from the recession and factory closings—was without bus service last year from Nov. 7 to Dec. 7. Voters finally approved a property tax increase to get their buses back, but as the city's tax base continues to erode local levies will not be able to make up for lost federal money.

Buffalo, Cleveland and Philadelphia—all cities in need of new transit equipment—face similar dilemmas. And Boston, which suffered a one-day transit shut-down two years ago, already has a shrinking transportation budget because local municipalities are chipping in less money to the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority as the result of "tax relief" measures.

The stated purpose of Reagan's proposed slash in mass transit funding is to make the farebox provide a greater share of the service's costs. But the effect of the cuts may be just the opposite. Right now, outside of the largest cities in the East and Midwest, the majority of public transit passengers are people who have no other means of transportation. Transit systems could significantly increase their farebox revenues if auto owners could be persuaded that on some trips taking a bus or train made more sense than driving. But that message is unlikely to be very convincing given the drastic service reductions and climbing fares forced by the federal cutbacks.

Another way transit systems can increase ridership and keep down operation costs is to put in rapid transit train lines. After a steep initial pricetag for construction, light rail and subway systems are often cheaper to maintain than bus lines, not only because they run on electricity rather than petroleum, but also because their speed and convenience attracts new transit riders. Under the legacy of the Nixon, Ford and Carter transportation policies, Buffalo, Baltimore, Atlanta, Miami, San Francisco, Washington, D.C., and Portland, Ore., all are building new rapid transit systems.

Even Los Angeles, where the auto is lord, is planning a token 18-mile subway, because, in the words of one local transportation official, "our freeways are overcrowded and an alternative system is desperately needed if the city is to continue to grow." At one time, L.A. sported one of the largest transit systems in the country; street cars served most of the metropolitan area. But the trolley system was dismantled in the late '40s and early '50s.

But now L.A. and other booming cities may never get a reprieve from the pollution, sprawling development patterns and congestion spawned by the automobile. The word from Washington is that no new rapid transit projects will be funded.

The Reagan administration, however, is committed to putting the finishing touches on the Interstate Highway project, despite estimates that it may cost as much as \$40 billion. In this year's budget, twice as much money has been slated for interstate construction as mass transit and Amtrak put together. That is keeping with the spirit of the 1980 Republican platform, which states, "We vigorously support the right of personal mobility as exemplified by the automobile and our modern highway system." Reagan's transportation policy upholds the opinions of his party brethren so well that many Americans may have no alternatives to highways and automobiles, especially those in expanding West Coast and Sun Belt cities.

Tom Feeney of the Tri-Met Transportation District in Portland, Ore., says the

Continued on page 22

Public transit proponents look to Congress to draw the line

A broad assortment of organizations representing consumers, labor, environmentalists, minorities, transportation officials and local governments have voiced opposition to the Reagan administration's mass transit cuts. But so far, their objections have only been heard in scattered outbursts.

"We hope to get a coalition started," notes a lobbyist with the Environmental Policy Center, "but it hasn't gotten off the ground yet."

The most vigorous campaign against the cuts is being waged by transit systems themselves, under the auspices of the American Public Transit Association (APTA). At a March 7 legislative conference APTA drafted a mass transit agenda that argued the need for

keeping current levels of federal funding, maintaining operating subsidies to transit systems and appropriating more money for new rapid transit projects. It also offered support for Secretary of Transportation Drew Lewis' recent proposal for a five-cent hike in the federal gasoline tax, with one cent of the increase being earmarked for public transit.

Lewis' plan unveiled March 1, is a new wrinkle in the mass transit issue. It is uncertain whether the president, who remains steadfast in his opposition to any new taxes, will even back the measure. But Reagan has voiced support for increases in user's fees, which could apply to the gas tax since four out of the five cents would go for highway con-

struction and repair.

Even if the tax is enacted things could still be tough for public transportation. The estimated \$1 billion raised by the penny-per-gallon levy would only make up for last year's cuts. The administration is also expected to continue its push for further cuts, including the end of operating subsidies and new rapid transit projects.

But APTA officials think transit systems may be able to hold the line against the vicious cycle of higher fares and lower ridership through revenues from the new gas tax and the derailing of any further transit cuts in congressional committees. So just like the supporters of many other social and environmental programs, it appears mass transit advocates are pinning their hopes on the willingness of an already uncooperative Congress to buck Reagan out of the saddle as the nation's chief policy maker.

—Jay Walljasper

By Michael Hoyt

NEW YORK

OBITUARIES FOR THE NEW York *Daily News*, the largest metropolitan daily in the country, are already written. If it closes, TV will catch the emotions of young pressmen with mortgage payments and old editors with memories while commentators blame the paper's tough unions or the mistakes of local government.

But if the *Daily News* prints its last paragraph, the blame might more accurately be lodged at the door of a rapacious Tribune Co. of Chicago, which put the newspaper up for sale a week before Christmas and has yet to make a deal, and according to the rumor mill, could shut the *News* down any moment now.

For the first time in its history, the *News* lost money last year—\$11 million overall. But it made a profit during the last four months in the year, after dropping the afternoon *Tonight* edition, a \$20 million wasted effort to seek "upscale" readers and alter a 63-year-old working-class image. With advertising lineage and circulation climbing in early 1982, it is presumably still in the black. The *News* can be saved—with or possibly even without a new buyer—with the aid of plans slowly and shakily emerging from the paper's unions and the city's politicians. The question now is whether the Tribune Co. will allow these seedlings to take hold.

If not, some 4,000 people will be added to the jobless rolls, but it will be worse than just another plant closing. The death of the *News* would mean another surrender to economic trends that are strangling diversity in urban journalism, often shifting coverage away from city dwellers who most need a strong newspaper. The *Washington Star* and *Philadelphia Bulletin* are gone, leaving essentially one newspaper cities. This week's victim was the afternoon *Minnesota Star*, which was absorbed into its jointly-owned sister, the *Minneapolis Tribune*, on April 5. Like the *News*, the *Star* was profitable, but its owners took what knowledgeable observers called "an aggressive move" to bolster the company's relatively low profits rather than a defensive move to stem losses. Some 110 employees, and Minneapolis, will pay the price.

In New York, the *Daily News* is the people's paper, read by more than 1.5 million every weekday. The *New York Times*, too lofty for many readers, doesn't pretend truly to cover the city, while the *New York Post*, largely unreliable outside its sports pages, pretends to cover the city but doesn't. Quality journalism is equally rare on local TV. "The current plight of the *Daily News* is an American metaphor that is or will be enacted in every city in the land," Columbia School of Journalism professor Fred Friendly testified late last month at a hearing about how to keep the *Daily News* alive, that was called by Republican State Senator Roy Goodman. "Its survival is too fundamental to democracy to permit it to be determined by private dealing between self-insulated sellers and reluctant, furtive buyers." But for the moment, that is the case.

After three months of silence from the Tribune Co., union officials emerged from a meeting with its representatives March 25 with the feeling they had a pledge against a sudden shutdown, though pessimists note the *Daily News* may be worth more dead than alive, for its valuable 42nd Street real estate.

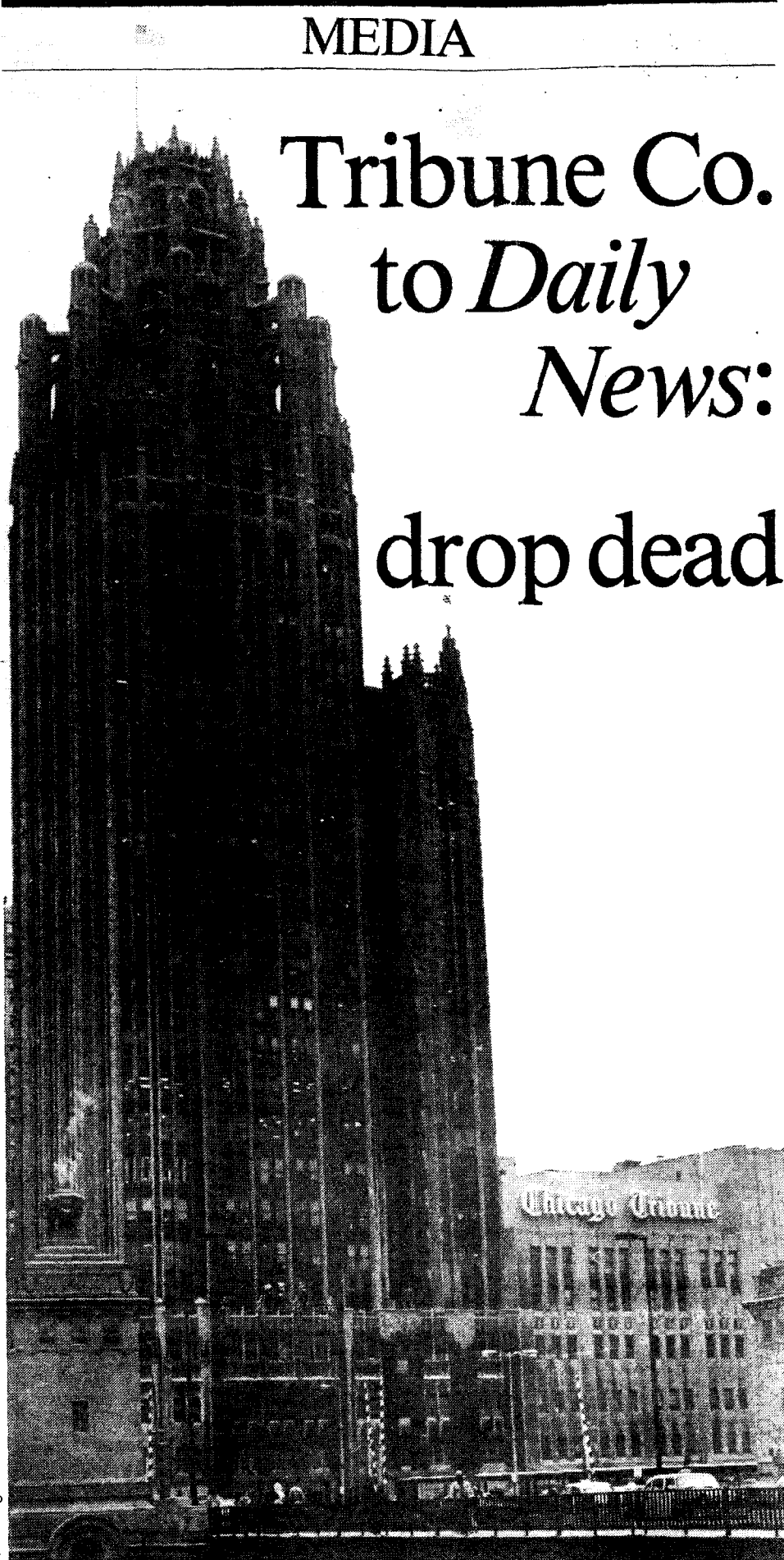
The latest rumor contends that Donald Trump, a young real estate developer, has maneuvered ahead of three other potential buyers, and is ready to talk business with the unions. But there have been rumors about the fate of the *News* since Christmas.

How the *News*, a paper with more readers than any other but the *Wall Street Journal* and the third highest newspaper revenues in the country (some \$350 million last year), came to this position is not altogether clear.

This turn of events is even harder to understand considering the Tribune Co.'s claim of a sentimental attachment to it. The *News* was founded in 1919 by Joseph

MEDIA

Tribune Co. to *Daily* *News*: drop dead



There are rumors that the private Tribune Co. may go public and thus wants to dump anything that clouds its profit picture.

Medill Patterson, cousin of Colonel Robert McCormick, who had founded the Tribune Co.'s flagship, the *Chicago Tribune*, in 1911. Patterson, who once considered himself a socialist, conceived the *News* as a picture newspaper and urged his editors to keep it simple: "Tell it to Sweeney," he said. "The Stuyvesants will take care of themselves."

Today a large part of the estimated 400 stockholders are McCormick and Patterson relatives. Patterson's son James is so upset at the prospect that he has asked the stockholders to join him in a fight at the company's next stockholder meeting, April 8 in Chicago. Patterson contends the paper can't be dumped unless two-thirds of the stockholders agree. No one seems to know if he has a chance. But *Fortune* magazine notes the value of each of the 7,584 outstanding Tribune Co. shares rose in value from \$78,000 to \$90,000 at the end of last year, after word of improved earnings and of the plan to sell the *News*.

The Tribune Co., a small empire including several newspapers, radio and TV stations and paper mills, announced a record \$30 million fourth quarter in 1981. Overall, the company made \$89.1 million on revenues of \$1.4 billion, up 14 percent from 1980 despite red ink at the *News*. Since last year it has embarked on a \$700 million, four-year expansion program.

There are rumors that the private company may go public and thus wants to dump anything that clouds its profit picture. The *News* might have finished 1981 in the black, with circulation and advertising lineage rising in early 1982, but apparently the projections for the future

were not good enough for the Tribune Co. The company has kept those projections secret, but it seems costs are rising faster than revenues.

Caught in two trends.

Like other urban dailies with a mass appeal, the *News* is caught in two trends—the migration of the middle class to the suburbs and the tendency these days of newspaper advertisers to seek only upscale readers. The *News* has dropped half a million readers since 1976, and the message it got from experts is that the 1.5 million readers left are not the sort advertisers want anymore.

Advertisers are not the sole problem, though, according to some analysts who maintain the *News* is still staffed for a circulation of 2 million. Some charge the unions, particularly the crafts, with featherbedding. The unions say this ignores newspaper history and technology. The printers, for example, negotiated an agreement in 1973 that gave them each a lifetime job in return for allowing technology that essentially made their work obsolete. Attrition has cut their number by half since then, yet a large number remain without much work to do.

"What should they do, commit harakiri?" asks Theodore Kheel, a lawyer who since 1978 has represented the Allied Printing Trades Council, umbrella for 10 of the 11 major newspaper unions in the city. "It's not a simple problem—to say people who are the beneficiaries of a contract to keep their jobs should now be dumped. You can't start from a point and forget past history."

"Some of these people are over 65 or 70 years old, however, and they might be persuaded to quit," Kheel said. He considers the figure that has emerged from some analysts as necessary to make the *News* viable—1,000 job cuts—as "final solution talk," but notes that "there are many ways to cut costs, and the unions have said clearly that they are willing to help cut costs." Neither the Tribune Co. nor any potential buyer has approached the unions so far regarding concessions.

But the unions have recently taken their own steps toward saving the paper, including proposing a plan to move the entire operation to Brooklyn, the borough of the paper's largest circulation, where half the paper is already printed. This would free space in the paper's handsome, art deco, 42nd Street office, which could then be rented for high profits.

Meanwhile, Kheel has asked the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and the state Urban Development Corporation to consider low-interest loans for the printing plant the *News* so badly needs—the \$60 million investment the Tribune rejected. Somewhat belatedly (cynics believe that Mayor Edward Koch favors the *Post*), the city has offered to help with property tax exemptions and possible low-cost loans.

But the plan that may offer the most hope comes from the unions. The Allied asked Kheel to set up an Employee Stock Ownership Trust (an ESOT, or ESOP as they are more commonly called, for stock ownership plan). At the end of March, the unions were voting on a plan to have their next raise—10 percent due starting April 1—deposited in escrow accounts, toward possible use in buying *Daily News* stock. Three unions had agreed as *In These Times* went to press, and if all 11 agree, the unions will have raises amounting to \$15 million a year as a bargaining chip, possibly toward a partnership with a new owner or even toward buying the paper outright, as workers at a GM auto parts plant across the river in Clark, N.J., did for \$53 million last October.

In the case of a partial buyout, the plan might work this way: The trust would borrow money with the guarantee the new employer would repay the loan and use it to buy newly created stock from the employees. Thus, the employer receives an infusion of capital, its power vastly magnified by tax breaks under the ESOP law, while the employees have bought a piece of the firm, which should translate to job security plus an extra benefit—the stock.

In the case of the *Daily News*, a well-sculpted ESOP might offer cheap capital for a new owner to modernize the Brooklyn printing plant, while the unions might gain enough control of the company to guarantee that no one will take their seemingly inevitable concessions and run, the way the Charter Co. did with \$4.9 million in union concessions at the *Philadelphia Bulletin*.

Though the unions say they prefer a new owner, some believe they might well buy the paper themselves through an ESOP if no buyer comes forward. However, whether 11 unions with a somewhat fractious history can cooperate through the complex process of divvying up sacrifice and control is anybody's guess.

"My fear is that the moment will pass," said Robert Carroll, a *News* assistant editor and Guild official. "I believe we should be moving fast, hiring someone to do a feasibility study, explaining this thing to the rank and file. My fear is that we're going to turn around and find this newspaper closed." Underlying the tension is a somewhat natural gulf between the liberal and highly democratic Guild, which represents a quarter of the 3,800 *Daily News* employees, and the craft unions, whose greater economic strength is reflected in greater muscle in the Allied council.

But George McDonald, head of the Allied, predicted some kind of stock option plan can be formed. "These things (ESOPs) have mainly benefitted management in the past, but each one you hear about gets better and better for the worker," he said. "We'll have the best in the country, I guarantee you that. We can work together. We have to be all together on this."

Michael Hoyt is a New York-based freelance journalist.

Morial

Continued from page 6

two black candidates. Forty-six percent of the New Orleans' registered voters are black. Given the usual pattern of lower-black-than-white voter turnout, the "winning" coalition for black candidates in recent New Orleans elections has been more than 95 percent of the black vote and at least 20 percent of the white vote, mostly from the upper- and upper-middle-class strata.

In his narrow 1977 New Orleans mayoral runoff victory, Morial carried 97 percent of the black vote and 21 percent of the white vote. Morial hoped to repeat this formula for re-election in the February 1982 first primary. But, in addition to white conservative Ron Faucheux, the mayor faced the challenge of black candidate State Senator William Jefferson, a 34-year-old graduate of Harvard Law School.

Jefferson took the high road by proposing a progressive tax reform program (near revolutionary in New Orleans politics) that called for a state constitutional amendment to lift the homestead exemption, thereby allowing New Orleansians to decide by referendum if they wished to raise their property taxes. In addition, Jefferson criticized Morial for not effectively combating police brutality.

The racial breakdown of Morial and Jefferson's votes in the primary was surprising. The mayor garnered a whopping

91 percent of black votes, compared to only 8 percent for Jefferson. Morial masterfully convinced many blacks that voting for Jefferson was wasting a vote and would endanger the mayor's chances for re-election. On the other hand, among white voters Morial edged Jefferson by only a two-to-one margin, 14 percent to 7 percent. Jefferson's small vote total was equally divided between the city poorest blacks and richest whites.

A surprising endorsement.

All political polls conducted a week before the runoff called the election a dead heat. But just three days before the election, Moon Landrieu, the liberal mayor of New Orleans from 1970 to 1978 and HUD secretary in the Carter administration, enthusiastically endorsed Faucheux. Landrieu blanketed local black radio stations, urging voters to support Morial's white conservative opponent.

Black leaders responded by accusing Landrieu of betraying the black community, which had been his long-standing political base. In the 1970 New Orleans mayoral general election, 80 percent of black voters—possibly the largest black turnout in a major city in U.S. history—came out to elect Landrieu. Ironically, in 1982 Landrieu's endorsement of Faucheux accounted, in part, for the second largest black voter turnout ever in New Orleans. But this time, black voters went to the polls to re-elect the city's first black mayor.

Monte Piliawsky is an associate professor of political science at Dillard University. His book, titled *Exit 13, Oppression and Racism in Academia*, will be published later this month.

Ollman vs. The University of Maryland: A Landmark Case in Academic Freedom (and Winnable)

The Facts of the Case

On March 15, 1978, Professor Bertell Ollman was offered the position of Chairman of the Department of Government and Politics at the University of Maryland (College Park) by the Provost with the full approval of the Chancellor. Ollman, a professor at New York University and author of the book *Alienation: Marx's Conception of Man in Capitalist Society*, was selected over 100 or so other candidates by a faculty search committee.

More than a dozen Maryland state legislators, including the Chairmen of all the committees that deal with the University's budget, protested the appointment. Acting Governor Blair Lee dubbed it "unwise," saying "It may kick up quite a backlash." Several conservative syndicated columnists condemned the appointment, and at least three members of the University's Board of Regents made public their objections. Samuel Hoover, for example, said, "I just don't think a Marxist should be at a state institution in a position of that caliber."

Outgoing President of the University of Maryland, Wilson Elkins, held off confirming the appointment; and on July 19, 1978, incoming President John Toll finally rejected it. Denying that Professor Ollman's Marxist views had anything to do with the decision, President Toll claimed that he had acted solely on academic grounds, but he refused to state what these were.

The Trial

During the month long trial, which began on May 18, 1981, considerable evidence was brought forward of political pressure on President Elkins and Toll not to appoint Ollman, and of the interest both men showed in the views of politicians on this matter. In his testimony, President Toll finally gave the main "academic grounds" on which his decision was based: Ollman, he said, has "poor administrative judgment." As evidence of this, he cited two anti-Vietnam War political activities that Ollman is alleged to have taken part in in 1970.

The Verdict

Judge Alexander Harvey III, a member of one of Maryland's leading banking families, found for the defendants. Praising the great achievements of President Elkins and Toll as educators, the judge said he simply does not believe that they would lie about their actions.

The Appeal

An appeal can be won, and this would be a great help to radicals involved in other academic freedom cases. Judge Harvey made a number of serious judicial errors.

For example, he ruled out as irrelevant all evidence pertaining to the standards President Toll used in appointing department chairmen in his 16 years as a university president (13 at SUNY-Stony Brook and 3 at Maryland). This deprived Ollman of a base from which to show that he was being treated in a unique manner and judged from a standard that did not apply in other similar appointments.

The Importance of the Case

The rejection of Ollman's appointment under blatant political pressure, the decision of the Court and the way this decision was reached have all contributed to a chilling atmosphere for academic freedom in America's universities. This is especially true in light of the widespread publicity that this case has received. Moreover, the ruling not to hear evidence of the sort that is usually considered essential in discrimination cases gives important support to administrators who deviate from accepted norms when dealing with hiring, firing, tenure or promotion. Whatever the final judgment on Ollman, this ruling cannot be allowed to stand.

Your Help is Needed Now

Ollman's lawyers are working *pro bono* (free), but he is responsible for various "incidental expenses." The immediate need is for \$15,000 to \$20,000 (which he does not have) to type out the month-long trial transcript in order to begin the process of appeal. If progressives and others concerned with issues of academic freedom cannot help out in cases of such flagrant abuse, the time will quickly come when no one will want or be financially able to seek legal redress for any discriminatory practice. What will reactionary administrators unleash then? Both solidarity and enlightened self-interest require that Ollman be supported in his/our struggle. Please give generously—and pass this appeal on (include it in letters to friends).

Make checks out to: NECLC-Ollman Case, and send to National Emergency Civil Liberties Committee 175 Fifth Ave., N.Y., N.Y. 10010 (Donations are tax deductible)

Supporters of this appeal include—Scott Nearing (First person fired for his radical ideas at an American university—U. Penn. 1915), Paul Sweezy and Harry Magdoff (Monthly Review), Frances Fox Piven (Boston U.), Jim O'Connor (U. Calif.), Immanuel Wallerstein (SUNY-Binghamton), Sheldon Wolin (Princeton), Sam Bowles (U. Mass.), Bert Gross (CUNY-Hunter), C.B. MacPherson and Christian Bay (U. Toronto), Ted Lowi (Cornell), Peter Bachrach (Temple), Michael Parenti (I.P.S.), Ben Barber (Rutgers), Murray Edelman (U. Wis.), James Weinstein, (In These Times)

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POLITICS

Is a united European left taking shape?

By Diana Johnstone

VIENNA, AUSTRIA

THE EUROLEFT IS NOT YET born, but efforts are being made to conceive it. A certain number of farsighted scholars and militants from the main segments of Europe's divided working class movement—German social democrats, Italian communists, British Labourites, French socialists—are getting together for serious discussion. Their efforts, still too rare and usually ignored by their political parties, at least suggest that deep and sometimes bitter historical differences may be outdated and overcome by new common problems requiring totally different approaches.

The third Otto Bauer seminar sponsored by the Young Socialists in Vienna March 4-7 brought together 200 people from seven countries for sober and stimulating discussion on "the international crisis and ways to a new economic logic." Although speaking five different languages, participants from Austria, Germany, Italy, France, Britain, Spain and Sweden managed to get beyond a sequence of monologues to an actual exchange of important experience and ideas.

For Pietro Ingrao, chief theoretician of the Italian Communist Party's "third way," it was "an important step forward in the great joint effort needed to reinvigorate socialism with the force of powerful new ideas." Ingrao paid tribute to the Austro-Marxist Otto Bauer, intellectual patron saint of the gathering, as an important pioneer of an independent Western European "third way" to socialism. In the '20s Bauer and other social democrats of the Austro-Marxist school were virtually alone in applying Marxist analysis rather than polemics to the Communist-Social Democratic split in a vain attempt to unite the left against rising fascism.

Ingrao said the Vienna discussion illustrated a particularly significant aspect of the "third way" in that the economic question that was the main topic did not tend to elicit economic responses but political ones.

There was considerable consensus on the nature of the current crisis. The welfare state is being undermined by deepening unemployment that its Keynesian methods—negotiated control of aggregate demand—are unable to remedy. Austrian social welfare minister Alfred Dallinger noted that the consumer society made people passive, while the economic crisis "is breaking down solidarity, more and more, in Austria as elsewhere." While presented as the result of technical economic or technological factors, the crisis also results from a political offensive by capital, breaking the welfare state compromise that allowed labor a strong say in revenue distribution. Masses of people are being driven out of the labor force—marginalized economically and politically. Those who remain are set to squabbling among themselves.

Italian labor leader Bruno Trentin cautioned against underestimating the effectiveness of capitalism's current offensive against the working class. The shift from welfare to selective assistance was "creating new deep divisions inside the working class and using up all the energy of the class" in rearguard combats that pit one group against another.

The type of technological innovation that is underway promises only to eliminate more jobs. "Economic progress no longer seems synonymous with social progress," Ingrao emphasized. Socialists are going to have to face political, qualitative issues they have often tended to evade for the more neutral terrain of economic progress.

Ingrao stressed the need for "socialization of power," for bringing masses of people into the decision-making pro-

cess in order to combat the "alarming growth of militarization of life" all over the world. "We cannot leave these problems up to the generals in the Pentagon nor to General Jaruzelski," the Italian Communist said.

Two general strategies were repeatedly suggested to revitalize European socialism. One was to broaden the scope of the working class movement to respond to "new needs" expressed by women, youth and other groups. The other—totally complementary—was to develop new forms of industrial democracy.

Getting the traditional working class movement to look beyond its familiar economic concerns to new qualitative needs is not the same as seeking "alliances" outside the working class. The working class—defined as wage earners—is bigger than ever. But it is also increasingly fragmented. Recognition of "new needs" and their diversity is necessary for bringing the working class itself together.

A political project to help bring the class together is the task of reorganizing production to meet real needs.

Ken Coates of the British Labour Party told how Lucas Aerospace workers, fearing cutbacks, came up with a thousand pages of ingenious conversion plans, including life-saving kidney machines and electronic vehicles for people handicapped by deficient motor control. Research should be directed toward seeing what areas of social need can be matched to the high technology available, Coates said, adding, "This is what middle class advocates of socialist planning thought planning was all about. But it's not what it's been in the welfare state."

One positive sign was last month's Young Socialists seminar in Vienna, where 200 leftists discussed ways to achieve a "new economic logic."

The last Labour government did everything to choke the Lucas workers' initiative, said Coates, "but if there is ever another Labour government," things better be different.

Trentin described the experience of the factory councils won by the worker struggles of 1969, and which he helped develop as head of the united Italian metalworkers union in the '70s. The councils seemed well-prepared to undertake their unique effort to influence investments. They were armed with the historic memory of previous council experiments in Italy as well as an extraordinarily high degree of combativity and political consciousness. The factory council experiment is an essential factor in formulating the Italian Communist Party's "third way" to socialism, but Trentin cautioned that it was necessary to be fully aware of the experience's negative aspects.

Workers were ready to fight not just for their own particular, corporatist interests, but for the good of the working class as a whole. For example, industry could build a factory that made a socially useful product in a region suffering from unemployment. But Trentin stressed the "contrast between the impressive energy in bringing pressure and the modesty of the concrete results."

The factory councils' combative capacity was not matched by a comparable ability to frame proposals. And the difficulty grows with the complication of economic problems.

Worker control (or whatever one wants to call it), central at the dawning of the socialist movement in the 19th century, has long been relegated to the sidelines as trivial or utopian by both communists and social democrats. It is now creeping back toward the center of discussions of socialism.

Trentin warned against counting on



Pietro Ingrao (left) stressed the need to transform the internal nature of the European left, while Detlev Albers, (right) stressed the need to transform its relations with the third world.

at non-capitalist development and recently has even managed to bring Eastern-bloc socialist states into such dependence that their economies have tended gradually to be reinfused and reintegrated into the capitalist economy. The pressure is much stronger on developing countries.

Albers reminded French socialists that their slogan "Nationalize so as not to multinationalize" applied even more to underdeveloped countries. Albers said Marxists must recognize their past tendency to underestimate capitalism's capacity to change and survive its crisis.

Too busy to attend as scheduled, French Research and Technology Minister Jean-Pierre Chevenement sent his aide Thierry Bondoux to put forth the economic logic of the French Socialist government. Bondoux insisted that strong economic growth—propelled by nationalized industries, resolutely inserted in the world market, developing exports yet recapturing the domestic market—was the necessary and possible way out of the economic crisis. He suggested that socialism "is the tiger in the tank of productivity." Autogestion, or worker self-management, was postponed indefinitely.

The French Socialists' "voluntarist industrial policy" encountered a good deal of polite skepticism in Vienna. For example, party-less French Eurocommunist Christine Buci-Glucksmann warned that French social transformation could not succeed without an active grassroots movement, and none was in sight.

In closing remarks at the end of the four-day seminar, Albers thanked the Austrian Young Socialists "for allowing a discussion still not possible inside the SPD on the eve of the probable disaster of its policy in Bonn. The French situation forces us to think," he continued. "Either the French left succeeds, and the effect will help bring the left in other countries to government responsibility, or it fails, and the European left as a whole will face an even greater credibility gap."

Two poles.

If the old Italian Pietro Ingrao represented one pole of the Vienna encounter, the young West German professor Detlev Albers represented the other. While Ingrao stressed the need to transform the internal nature of the European left, Albers stressed the need to transform its relations with the third world. The present crisis threatened workers everywhere with increased hardship, but the third world was being driven toward large scale social catastrophe, unless there is "a breakthrough to a new economic logic," Albers said. The key issue is the capitalist-dominated world market, which time and again has limited or torn down attempts

Article by
Joel Parker and Dan Biggs

SAN FRANCISCO

This year it will cost each taxpayer \$10 to keep Amtrak trains rolling, yet only one out of 100 intercity travellers will actually ride them. Are public funds being squandered to support the travel quirks of a privileged few, as Amtrak critics allege? Or are passenger trains the economical, energy-efficient investment Amtrak claims them to be?

A decade of congressional wavering on Amtrak underscores the lack of consensus on the passenger train issue. Supporters and critics alike accuse Congress of expediently bowing to special interest pressure and avoiding a rational assessment of Amtrak's value. Both sides argue that after 10 years of the Amtrak experiment, it is time for Congress to settle the controversy once and for all.

"Even an optimal [rail passenger] system would be deficit ridden and cost-ineffective," says Len Rippa of the National Taxpayers Union. Other critics point out that although the government has spent \$4 billion on Amtrak since 1971 its deficit keeps mushrooming and private sector transportation modes yield far more for each tax dollar. A government study released in 1979 shows that in 1978 the taxpayer laid out 12.9 cents in operating grants for each passenger mile delivered by Amtrak, but less than one cent per mile for cars, buses and airplanes.

Critics also scoff at Amtrak's alleged energy-efficiency. Measuring passenger-miles generated per gallon of fuel shows that Amtrak does only slightly better than the automobile and far worse than the intercity bus. That airplanes rank a distant last in fuel-efficiency is offset by their ability to move people long distances in brief periods of time—something trains can never do. And Amtrak hauls less

than 1 percent of all intercity travellers—a mere spit in the tank of national energy needs. Even in a gasoline-shortage emergency, Amtrak has almost no national impact.

"Amtrak performs best where it performs least," says Robert Blanchette, the top railroad administrator at the Department of Transportation (DOT). Blanchette objects to further funding for a "rolling national park"—the long distance Nostalgia Limiteds that traverse the great empty spaces of hinterland, USA, with their costly dining, sleeping and lounge cars. Amtrak service should be restricted to the Northeast Corridor, Blanchette says, where population density, land scarcity, transportation congestion and a high proportion of business travellers justify a

limited number of passenger trains. Northeast Corridor trains account for half of Amtrak's ridership but only a fourth of its cost. Outside the busy Northeast, Amtrak's energy output drops from 80 passenger miles per gallon to 35.

Critics also point out that Amtrak is the most labor-intensive means of travel. Labor eats up 55 percent of Amtrak's operating budget, largely because long-haul trains require cooks, waiters and porters, plus numerous operating personnel. Even Amtrak advocates like the National Association of Rail Passengers (NARP) attack the "archaic" work rules that govern the operating crafts—rules

that Amtrak inherits from the railroads with whom the unions negotiate. For example, when an Amtrak train chugs over the tracks of various railroads, the operating crews change wherever one railroad ends and another begins, and each crew member from each railroad is guaranteed a full day's pay—sometimes for as little as two hours work.

Free enterprise ideologues challenge the propriety of using tax dollars to compete with private stockholders in bus and airline companies. Although Amtrak competes with airlines in only a few markets, it competes with buses throughout its entire system. The DOT says that the fare differential between trains and buses has narrowed significantly over the past decade, giving Amtrak—with its uncramped seating and separate dining and sleeping cars—an unfair competitive advantage. A long distance train "is more



I

Photographs: Diane Schmidt





Running on Empty

like a long weekend in a hotel," frets Arthur Lewis of the American Bus Association. Lewis points out that Amtrak reaches only 500 cities, nearly all of which are served by buses. He says that few Americans would be stranded if the costly trains were eliminated.

A mtrak supporters claim that the DOT's anti-rail bias reflects the highway and airline lobbies' stranglehold on national transportation priorities. They argue that comparisons of Amtrak's direct subsidies to those received by other modes are sleight-of-hand tricks, because Amtrak pays for services that the other modes receive free from the government. Each year Amtrak pays \$250 million to the private railroads to run passenger trains over their tracks and spends another \$50 million for upkeep of its stations. On the other hand, they argue, cities

build airports, they argue, not the airline companies, and the federal government pays nearly \$2 billion a year for air traffic control. And, as Amtrak's first president quipped, "When was the last time Greyhound built a highway?"

Amtrak spokesman Arthur Lloyd jibes, "Figures don't lie, but liars can figure," pointing out that the 1979 statistics on subsidies per passenger mile ignore the taxpayers' gargantuan capital investment in highway and air travel. In the past 20 years the government spent \$80 billion on highways (and \$525 billion since 1921). With that kind of money, Lloyd adds, the U.S. could have the most comprehensive, sophisticated rail service in the world.

Short of that, Amtrak favors the development of high-speed, multi-frequency rail corridors to link major metropolitan areas, 200 to 400 miles apart, such as Chicago-Detroit, Los Angeles-San Diego and up to a dozen other areas. But Amtrak officials warn that these corridors would be viable only if they are connected by a limited number of long distance trains acting as the vertebrae that holds together a national rail network.

Long distance trains will never be profitable, rail proponents concede, but their cost-effectiveness would be greatly enhanced if connected to, and fed passengers from, widespread corridor service. And long distance trains are often comprised of numerous medium-distance segments where ridership is high and the trains provide an essential alternative to the automobile. In 1980, 73 percent of passenger miles and 65 percent of revenues were generated outside the Northeast.

And what about those 20 million Americans who can not or will not fly? Smaller-sized cars and the increasing costs of auto travel and the airlines' abandonment of many cities has made long distance rail service a necessity for millions more. Amtrak surveys show that nearly all of their passengers drive cars or fly when no trains are available—only a few opt for buses on long distance trips. Today's average bus trip is only 100 miles. "If anything, Amtrak helps the bus industry," says Ross Capon, NARP's executive director, "by feeding passengers onto buses to cities where the trains don't stop."

Amtrak officials challenge the government's energy studies as well, claiming

that they understate the trains' potential efficiency by including low ridership routes and are based on outdated equipment. Amtrak's new Superliner cars can get 200 passenger miles per gallon of fuel, about the same as the bus and far better than the auto or airplane.

Sensitive to charges that Amtrak supporters are sentimental idealists, NARP and other advocates have grown increasingly reticent to tout difficult-to-measure social benefits of rail passenger service like superiority in reducing air pollution and the trains' stellar safety record. (Fatalities per 10 billion passenger miles are 140 by car, six by plane, three by bus and less than one by Amtrak. And each year auto accidents account for \$50 billion in damages.) Nor is much said about the advantages of having a mobile population or that Amtrak provides a source of socially useful employment. But as the government continues to chip away at the system, Amtrak service becomes increasingly harder to defend strictly on economic grounds.

Amtrak's lifelong handicap is reflected in every aspect of its economic performance—"Because the government never intended for it to work, it never gave Amtrak more than half a loaf," according to former Indiana Senator Vance Hartke. Each year, Amtrak turns away thousands of potential riders because it cannot muster more than 1,500 cars to cover its entire national system. By contrast, British Rail employs 18,000 passenger cars; France, 15,000; West Germany, 18,000; and Japan, 26,000.

Thousands more potential customers discover "You can't get there by train." Amtrak bypasses entire states, like Oklahoma and Maine, and a score of major cities, like Nashville and Louisville. Indirect connection between several city-pairs further deflates ridership—travelling from Denver to Dallas requires a sidetrip to Chicago.

"Amtrak's route system is like having a 50,000-acre dairy farm but only a few hundred cows," says an Amtrak planner. On three-quarters of the system there is only one train a day in each direction, or less. Nearly 60 percent of Amtrak's total budget goes to infrastructure costs such as stations, switching terminals and repair facilities. Most of these are essential whether one train operates on a given route, or 50 trains do. Many of Amtrak's "on-the-ground" employees service only one or two trains per eight-hour shift, although they could service many more at essentially the same cost.

The problem spirals each time the government lops off a few more trains. They have to cut a lot to save a little because they are also cutting revenues while making only a small dent into the fixed, infrastructure costs. The result is that fewer trains shoulder an even higher proportion of fixed costs. And Amtrak's contribution to meeting transportation needs shrinks accordingly. In metropolitan areas where the trains run, Amtrak captures 15 to 20 percent of the travelling public, but its limited route network brings down its national share to only 1 percent. Amtrak's ability to generate revenue by hauling U.S. mail and package express is equally limited.

O verseas, the nationalized railroads of Europe and Japan present nearly a mirror image to Amtrak. The longstanding commitment to passenger trains is viewed as a social investment, and rail systems compare favorably to other transportation modes and are far superior to Amtrak. The overseas experience demonstrates that fast, convenient and reasonably priced trains will lure travellers out of cars and planes, thus reducing national energy and transportation costs.

A 1972 study of European rail systems revealed that for population and geography comparable to the U.S., Europeans spent \$6 billion a year on their pas-

senger trains. The U.S. has doled Amtrak less than that over its entire 10-year existence. Each year Japan spends on rolling stock alone the equivalent of Amtrak's entire budget. As a result, the French system carries 12 percent of intercity travelers to Amtrak's one, Italy almost 400 million riders to Amtrak's 21 million.

Amtrak's heralded high-speed Northeast Corridor service runs at snail's pace compared to France's new 200 mile-an-hour TGV (Tres Grande Vitesse) line between Paris and Lyon. In Japan, the famed Shinkansen "Bullet" trains have averaged over 100 miles per hour for nearly two decades. In Germany and Britain, 125 mph expresses are a regular part of the landscape, and Italy, Switzerland and the Soviet Union are all planning new high-speed rail lines.

Although the American passenger equipment industry has suffered from years of neglect, the glaring speed differentials between foreign nations and the U.S. reflect more of a political gap than a technological one. When the Northeast Corridor was readied for high-speed passenger trains, Washington decided that the line would also accommodate long, heavy freight trains. The "freight drags" not only move slowly, thereby clogging traffic, but also steadily pulverize the roadbed. The result has been an almost continuous interruption of passenger train schedules while track is replaced, and trains that average only 70 mph though capable of 100 mph speeds.

The Reagan administration is currently salting the Corridor's wounds by reducing general operating funds and postponing—perhaps permanently—the electrification of the Boston-to-New Haven route. On the rest of Amtrak's system, trains average no better than 45 mph, largely because the tracks are designed for freight traffic, Amtrak schedules are "padded" so that its trains don't interfere with the slower freights and every train must make every stop because the equipment shortage precludes "expresses."

Half the trains in Europe are electrified. It's the most economical and energy-efficient way to move people and ideal for congested urban corridors. It is also a barometer of a nation's commitment to rail travel because initial capital investment is so costly. For example, France's TGV line cost \$1.6 billion. But the French expect the service to pay for itself while saving them 100,000 tons of petroleum each year. In Japan, the Tokyo-to-Osaka "Bullet" trains saved about 40 million barrels of oil during the '70s. In the U.S., only the 225-mile stretch between New York and Washington is electrified.

International transportation experts also prescribe passenger trains as an antidote to highway and air congestion. A single 18-car train can accommodate 1,400 passengers—the equivalent of a mile-long caravan of buses or 636 automobiles stretched out over 20 miles. Economists note that the cost of constructing freeways and airports far exceeds the cost of improving already existing rail networks. And foreign rail systems benefit from rail labor unions' willingness to negotiate work rule economies in exchange for maintaining a high and stable level of employment. American rail unions, particularly in the operating crafts, balk at agreeing to similar concessions when their only prospect is fewer jobs and vague promises about Amtrak's survival.

Amtrak critics argue that comparisons with Europe and Japan are unfair because population densities overseas are much greater and because the American public will never give up the convenience and privacy of the automobile. Actually, the areas that Amtrak has pegged as potential "emerging corridors" are comparable in on-line population to European trains. As for Americans' love affair with

Continued on page 23

EDITORIAL

The El Salvador elections only give fuel to Haig

At the time of this writing it is not clear what the results of the election in El Salvador will be, even though the Christian Democrats appear to have a substantial plurality of the votes. But several things are already clear. The election was not an election as we know it, or as the people of any country with established parliamentary democracies know it. The election was not held to determine who will best represent the Salvadoran people in their government but to legitimize the ruling junta in the eyes of the American people.

Neither the center nor left, representing an indeterminate but substantial portion of El Salvador's population, participated as contestants for office—either because participation would have meant certain death, or because they viewed the election as fraudulent and corrupt, with no chance of a fair count.

Popular participation was nevertheless substantial. Current estimates are that as many as 70 percent of those eligible actually voted. It is impossible to say how many of these who voted did so from fear that they would be killed if they didn't. According to Raymond Bonner of the *New York Times* (March 30), about 10 percent of those voting voted "Nulo," as the leftists had requested, and in some areas these nullified or blank ballots exceeded those cast

for two or three of the six parties. It is impossible also to say how pervasive were the attempts by the guerrillas to stop people from voting. Some among the five guerrilla groups tried to disrupt the elections, others did not. Guerrilla units patrolling the Pan-American highway made no effort to stop voters streaming to the polls, but in guerrilla-controlled Morazan province only 7,000 votes were cast from a population of 250,000.

But the people were repeatedly told that voting would help stop the war, and it seems clear from all available evidence that those who voted would do anything to help bring an end to the violence that has wracked their country.

Secretary of State Alexander Haig had some reason to gloat over the results, for while the elections do not prove that a majority of Salvadorans support either Duarte or d'Aubuisson, they do indicate that a substantial majority do not want to see a continuation of the war. Unfortunately, however, the results may strengthen the hand of those in the administration who oppose a truly negotiated settlement in which the rebels could participate. The demands that the guerrillas should lay down their arms and enter into talks, which has been the administration response so far, will never be accepted by the rebels—at least not



unless the army and the death squads also lay down their arms, a request not likely to be made by Haig.

So we can expect the war to go on as before. And we can expect Haig cynically to use the election results to step up his campaign for increased American involvement in El Salvador and Central

America as a whole. Until now, administration policy has been a dismal failure, opposed by a great majority of Americans. The elections have done nothing to lessen the need for continued opposition to a military solution, or for the need to oppose further intervention, from either side, in this civil war. ■

Campaigning for socialism

The merger of the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee (DSOC) and the New American Movement (NAM) in Detroit, March 20-21, was an important symbolic step forward for the democratic socialist left in the United States. The new organization, which claims a membership of some 10,000, is now the largest socialist organization in the U.S., and the one with the greatest potential for bringing socialist principles and social goals into the mainstream of American political life.

The Democratic Socialists of America's (DSA) potential lies in its commitment to participation in the electoral process. DSA's emphasis will be, as DSOC's was, on creating and developing a socialist tendency within the Democratic Party. In this respect, and in its explicit identification as a socialist organization, DSA differs from the Citizens Party, which restricts its activities to third party candidacies or to running in non-partisan elections for municipal or county offices. In our view, these two perspectives are compatible, and, in the long run, can and should be mutually supportive.

But while the Citizens Party—with far fewer members than DSA, virtually no national organization and no visible support from the labor movement or from prominent leftists in office—seems to be taking seriously its task of running candidates in local elections, DSA has no discernable strategy for creating an independent base of power within the Democratic Party.

Before the merger, DSOC's political activities were limited primarily to organizing the Democratic Agenda, an attempt to create a left-liberal bloc of

Democrats in which DSOC played the role of initiator and broker. At its best, under the now-rescinded McGovern reforms, Democratic Agenda created a left presence at the 1978 Democratic Party mid-term convention. But Democratic Agenda did not become the broad coalition with independent leadership that DSOC had hoped. In effect, Democratic Agenda was a DSOC front, with the double disadvantage of not strengthening DSOC's organization or providing it with a public forum as a socialist organization.

Given that DSOC made no effort to create a presence for itself by running its own candidates on its own program within various Democratic primaries, when Democratic Agenda faltered DSOC became largely a debating society.

NAM, on the other hand, before the merger had no coherent approach to creating a national presence and no uniform approach to local political activity. But its local organizations were generally stronger, and they had greater incentive to develop a diversity of approaches to political work. The most positive result of this situation has been the election of a left majority and a socialist as mayor, NAM member Michael Rotkin, in Santa Cruz, Calif.

The nay-sayers.

At the merger convention, two delegates gave reasons in defense of DSA not running its own candidates for office. One argued that there is "no mass base now for a socialist proposal." The other argued that DSA was not a large enough organization and also that a "mass left opposition" does not yet exist.

The hope of the DSOC-NAM merger is in renewed focus on elections.

Both these answers beg the question of what to do rather than answering it. It is, of course, obvious that there is currently no "mass base" waiting to vote yes to socialism, just as it is obvious that it would be nice for DSA to have ten times as many members as it has now. (Would it then be large enough?) The real question is how most rapidly and effectively a socialist organization can create a popular following for itself and for its principles—indeed, whether it can do this at all without contesting in the real politics of this country, the electoral system, with a practical program based on socialist principles and social goals.

If socialist principles and social goals are in fact in the best interest of a majority of Americans and if the Republican and Democratic parties are currently pursuing policies against the best interests of the majority of the American people, then it seems incredible that socialists could not begin winning a popular following by presenting their views to the electorate for consideration.

Further, as anyone who has been engaged in election campaigns know, there

is no quicker way to attract members or to become known in a community than running a campaign for office.

This process is already under way, as the results in Burlington, Vt., Santa Cruz and Santa Monica, Calif., have shown. Further, DSOC depends in large degree on public identification with socialists already in office like Ruth Messenger on the New York City Council, Harry Britt on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors and Rep. Ron Dellums (D-Cal.). These leaders have helped legitimize DSOC by identifying with it, but in no case have they been dependent on DSOC for their election, or for remaining in office. It seems that once socialists are elected it's safe to have their support, but it's too risky to try electing one or two.

The case of Zolton Ferency is a good example. Four years ago Ferency ran in the Democratic primary for governor in Michigan and received 25 percent of the vote. This year, after being elected a country commissioner, and under vastly more favorable conditions for a long-time opponent of all that Reagan stands for, he is running again—without DSOC support. Of course, if he wins, DSA will love him, and he will no doubt help them. But even if that happens, DSA will not in the process have significantly increased its membership in Michigan, nor will it have been the cause of greater support for socialist principles on the part of the people of Michigan.

In 1982, with the Reagan administration already in disrepute among millions of working people and the poor, socialists are faced with the greatest opportunity they have had in many decades. At the same time, the formation of the Democratic Socialists of America gives them the potential to move rapidly ahead. It would be a shame if timidity and political shortsightedness prevented them from doing so. ■

LETTERS

IN THESE TIMES is an independent newspaper committed to democratic pluralism and to helping build a popular movement for socialism in the United States. Our pages are open to a wide range of views on the left, both socialist and non-socialist. Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions expressed in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the editors. We welcome comments and opinion pieces from our readers.

LOST AND FOUND

MARVIN GETTLEMAN'S ARTICLE (*ITT*, March 10) marked important recognition of a political event. But its significance was, we believe, lost in the text.

The reception Gettleman mentioned in his piece was not merely a nostalgic gathering, but a victory celebration. It represented the vindication of some 50 CCNY staff fired 40 years ago and the commitment of current staff to fight encroachments of their academic and political rights. The reception culminated a political struggle by one generation and marked the continuation of a part of that struggle by another.

The Rapp-Coudert Committee, commissioned by the New York State Legislature in 1940, was the first such investigation specifically to target members of the Communist party. Ably assisted by the likes of Sidney Hook, the Committee invented many of the mechanisms made famous in the hands of McCarran, McCarthy and their ilk.

The Committee wanted to eradicate the left's influence in the City's public schools and colleges. Recognizing the centrality of party members in that arena, it had two aims: to arouse public hostility against all alleged communists and to have them fired. Since the latter could not be accomplished directly, it pioneered the pressure tactics to push recalcitrant employers to do its dirty work.

There are two issues Gettleman ignored in his report. The reception was the final step in a process of political organizing begun nearly two years ago. The organizers wanted, of course, to "rehabilitate" long-banished colleagues; but also to build a coalition to oppose new attempts to purge the left. The adoption of resolutions first by the CCNY Faculty Senate, the University Senate and finally the Board of Trustees recognizing past injustice and pledging to safeguard civil liberties is testimony to the success of this effort.

Second, *ITT*'s readers would have been ignorant of why the purge happened in the first place and why we have reason to fear a repetition in some guise. City College was and is a pre-eminent working class college. Its ability to provide educational opportunities to people locked out of other institutions is entirely dependent on public funds. It is vulnerable for both these reasons. The left has led the fight to keep CCNY true to its mission. With Koch and Reagan taking the lead, the forces of oppression are gathering and, as in the earlier period, limited gains made by the left and its friends are threatened.

We found the people honored at the reception to be gallant, sophisticated, political allies whose advice and counsel were integral to winning support for the resolutions. They taught us a great deal about lifelong struggle and commitment.

—Stephen Leberstein
—Barbara Caress
New York

RAPP-COUDERT

IN HIS ARTICLE, "HISTORY: ANTI-COMMUNIST PURGES ON CAMPUSES RECALLED" (*ITT*, March 10), Marvin E. Gettleman regrettably left out essential facts and missed entirely the socio-political significance for the present of the action of the CCNY Trustees apologizing to the victims of the Rapp-Coudert Commit-

tee in New York 40 years ago for the injustice done to them and for the violation of their academic freedom and constitutional rights.

Seeing only nostalgia in the reception tendered by the City College Faculty Senate on Dec. 17, to the surviving victims and their families, Gettleman failed even to report the results of an 18-month struggle that started at the City College, spread to the City University and culminated in the resolution of the Board of Trustees of the City University on Oct. 26. In that resolution, the Trustees of a network of some 23 senior and community colleges in New York City not only recognized "the injustice done," but also declared that the "unwillingness to testify publicly" to their political beliefs before a state legislative investigation into communist subversion was no adequate reason for the dismissal of more than 40 members of the teaching and administrative staff.

To have such a resolution adopted by such Trustees in these days when the rumble of Reaganite repression is heard in the land is a victory that the left might well celebrate.

How was that victory achieved? The struggle was initiated by Dr. Alice Chandler, acting-president of the City College, when on April 13, 1980, she accidentally learned about the Rapp-Coudert Committee invasion of the College. When a few months later she left that campus to assume the presidency of the State University of New York at New Paltz, the struggle was pressed by Dr. Stephen Leberstein, a historian and college administrator, who enlisted the aid of faculty members that saw the issues of constitutional rights and academic freedom in this all-but-forgotten injustice. As a result, the Faculty Senate of the City College, on March 19, 1981, with only one dissenting vote, passed the resolution that became the text of the one adopted by the Trustees. Then on May 19 the Faculty Senate of the City University as a whole passed a similar resolution, calling on the Trustees to act.

For the record let me also correct some of Gettleman's factual errors: 1) Most of us who were fired in 1941 were not "untentured faculty"; the untentured were simply not reappointed; I was tentured and had been teaching for 13 years; most of my associates had been teaching from eight to 12 years. 2) I stated my Communist affiliation, not "later" as Gettleman has it, but from the beginning; my conviction for perjury was based on my refusal to be an informer and not, as Gettleman implies, by "later" admission of membership. 3) There were three informers at Brooklyn College, not one: there are other reasons why only a few were fired there and so many at the City College; 4) I know of no faculty Communists who were actually "recruited by their students," although students sometimes helped radicalize faculty members. 5) At Queens College of the City University I taught not "ethnic studies" but American Jewish history (as an Adjunct Professor, 1972-1976).

—Morris U. Schappes
Editor, Jewish Currents
New York

Marvin Gettleman replies: Morris Schappes may be right that what I called the nostalgic vindication of the Rapp-Coudert veterans may be a significant victory for the left. If a case of this sort were made, it would have to include discussions of the recent rehabilitation of academic McCarthy victims at Temple

University and at Reed College. But I am skeptical. Even after the New York City Board of Higher Education action, those dismissed college professors of the McCarthy and pre-McCarthy periods (unlike some New York City high school teachers) have yet to see a penny of restored pension payments or lost salaries.

As for Schappes' corrections of the results of my research into the Rapp-Coudert period, I will out of respect for his long-time honorable position on the left refrain from any point-by-point rebuttal. I will just say as a historian that there is often a gap between the memories of actual participants in historical events, and what is revealed by careful study of the record.

STEREOTYPICAL

IAM APPALLED BY THE LACK OF EDITORIAL judgment shown in the decision to print an item on "...oil rich Saudi Arabians" (Culture Shock, March 10). *ITT* should be challenging—not perpetuating stereotypes of greedy, rich, Semites. More in-depth coverage of the politics of Middle Eastern oil and arms trade, as featured in the past, would help this effort. In the meantime articles such as this one only hurt it.

—Christie Balka
Chicago

WRONG STERLING

IN LEADING OFF MY REVIEW OF VINCENT Harding's *There Is A River* (*ITT*, March 24), I paraphrased the observation that "the poet should not shout or scream but should win his way toward triggering the desire to shout in the reader." I incorrectly credited the remark to Sterling Brown. It should be attributed to the historian Sterling Stuckey and is taken from Stuckey's introduction to *Southern Road*, a book of Brown's poetry.

—Dave Roediger
Chicago

LESTER JOINS THE CIA

AS A TWO YEAR SUBSCRIBER TO *ITT* and a non-communist, I would like to comment on ex-Communist Lester Rodney and his review of the confessions and adventures of ex-Communist Steve Nelson (*ITT*, March 24).

During the time I've been reading your paper I found it to be among the slyest, though not the most subtle publication. I buy it and find it a useful tool to my study of this new phenomenon: the increasing anti-Communism of pub-

lications on the Left. Warren Hinkle, Bay Area writer and columnist, once referred to CIA operatives as men who would change to CYA people, which means "cover your asses." So when Senator Denton brings his anti-Terrorist Committee to town, Rodney and the *ITT* can say, "didn't you read our review of Steve Nelson's book?" Or "we've always been anti-Communist."

Lester Rodney, one of the embittered ex-Communists, refers to himself and Nelson as "the class of '57." Wasn't it possible to get someone on your staff who is not an ex-Communist to review this book? At \$19.95 a pop not many of Nelson's working-class friends will be able to read his revelations.

I know several ex-Communists, not embittered ones, still working to make this a better world. In contrast we have two ex-Party big-wigs living here in the Bay Area, both former writers for the CP, who write only on anti-Communist themes, with one of them getting his diatribes published in the Hearst press. I am a member of the Grey Panthers, a group of my peers, and I haven't seen either of the aforementioned ex-Communists offering to give us a hand. Most of these former embittered Communists don't do anything in the way of social action in our community.

I've read a couple of these "tell-all" stories by these ex-CP people and found them not only boring but, because of the writers background, untrustworthy as well.

—Harry Sheer
Berkeley, Calif.

CIA PLANNING

IHAVE SOME DIFFICULTY WITH a statement in your recent editorial, "God, they know not what they do" (*ITT*, March 24). It reads, "The insurgents existed without it, just as Solidarity in Poland existed without the CIA's inspiration or direction."

I'll grant you that conditions existed in Poland that helped the Solidarity union develop, but it is pure bullshit to say that the CIA was not involved.

Have you read any of Agee's books on long-term planning by the CIA? Other former agents have also written similar revelations.

To make a statement as you did—it sounds like Reagan or Haig. You get carried away by anti-Semitism.

—Alex Kurke
High Bridge, Wisc.

Editor's note: Please try to keep letters under 250 words in length. Otherwise we may have to make drastic cuts, which may change what you want to say. Also, if possible, please type and double-space letters—or at least write clearly and with wide margins.

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PERSPECTIVES

By Alexander Cockburn
and James Ridgeway

WASHINGTON

ONE OF THE TRAGEDIES of the times is that the right has seized the issue of high taxes from the left, and run on lowered taxation straight into the White House. Tragedy has of course become farce with Reagan's supply-side contortions. But taxes remain among the terrain held by the right.

As the April 15 deadline descends, we do not hear Democrats and left politicians answering the basic complaint of the average taxpayer: that he is paying too much; that the system of payment is absurdly complicated; that corporations and the rich are getting away with murder. Democrats are content merely to argue that taxes are necessary to pay for the poor and support useful functions of the welfare state, and that it is a matter of returning to business as usual, away from Reagan's assault.

The Democrats' answer is to play the short-term strategy: causing an uproar about the size of the national debt and taunting Republicans with the mighty Reagan deficits as Congress readies itself to vote for another raising of the national debt ceiling—now more than \$1 trillion.

The hidden budget.

The reality is that the right uses budget deficits as a way of beating down the poor. Less social spending equals, in their logic, another step toward lowered taxes and a balanced budget. Nothing could be more false. The budget for fiscal 1983 supposedly will total \$868 billion. But nobody talks about the other budget, hidden in the tax codes brokered out in the House Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee.

This shadow budget is made up of subsidies, in the form of tax reductions to corporations and individuals. If the International Engulf and Devour Corporation is allowed to deduct its slave-labor camp in Chile (as an incentive to greater productivity) and thereby reduce its tax payment to the Treasury by \$25 million, then the rest of the nation's taxpayers have to make up that \$25 million. Passing the slave-labor deduction provision represents a budgetary commitment by government, even though it appears only in the tax codes—never in the official budget published at the start of every year.

FROM the Ashes NICARAGUA TODAY

From the Ashes: Nicaragua Today is a compelling new one-hour color documentary that enables us to understand the human realities and political complexities behind today's headline news from Central America. The film traces the historical roots of the Nicaraguan national liberation movement, features remarkable scenes of the full-scale insurrection in 1979 which overthrew the Somoza dictatorship, and chronicles U.S. relations with Nicaragua, from previous military interventions to the present antagonism of the Reagan Administration towards the Sandinista government.

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It's time for a tax reform that won't aid the truly greedy

These so-called "tax expenditures" represent the fastest-growing part of the real federal budget. In 1967, they totaled \$36.6 billion; in 1982, they amount to \$266.3 billion. So in 1982, government is actually pledging to spend one-third more than Reagan was proclaiming in his message to Congress. Last year's battles over taxes between Democrats and Republicans in Congress were really tussles about which interest groups would get these tax subsidies.

The tax-expenditure industry is enormous. It not only accounts for the federal bureaucracy, most notably represented by the Internal Revenue Service, which has to figure out and monitor increasingly Byzantine provisions, but also for the swelling legions of lawyers and accountants who help their corporate clients get tax breaks. To take one example, the ingenious arrangement written into law by Congress last year, whereby a profitable company can buy tax losses from an unprofitable one, is estimated to have provided \$100 million in fees over one year to lawyers and other middlemen: this at a time when the Congress was busy cutting food stamps and recommending the nutritional value of ketchup in school meals as a way to cut the budget.

You don't hear much about real tax reform in the Congress today, even though it is potentially the juiciest of issues for Democrats. Among the few giving thought to the matter is Byron Dorgan, a first-term congressman from North Dakota, who established his political reputation as tax commissioner of that state. Dorgan's thinking—not the current fashionable "neo-liberalism"—provides the outlines for a true

left strategy, containing many of the ornaments that have been appropriated by the right: anti-bureaucratism, lifting government off the backs of the citizenry, simplification, and above all reduction of tax rates for the little guy:

'Storm clouds gathering over the tax system.'

What's wrong with the income tax?

Dorgan: The first thing you have to do is to back up and analyze whether the tax system as it exists is worth saving, or whether we should create something different. My conclusion is, after having looked at it for so many years, and knowing that it's supposed to be progressive and related to the ability to pay, that the whole thing ought to be changed. Maybe we ought to go to a completely new and simplified tax system that represents some sort of mildly progressive tax on adjusted gross income, a tax that makes sure everybody pays. Right now, you've got a system where almost every secretary, clerk, fireman or policeman in the city of New York is paying more income tax on an effective percentage basis than Exxon is. That kind of tax system is absolutely indefensible for a Democrat or a Republican. The reason we continue to allow it to exist is that the people in whose interest it is pay a lot of money to keep it there.

The system manifests itself in so many areas—commodities futures, leasing, tax inducements to expand through acquisition. All these things represent the pursuit of increased profits on paper without increasing the production of the country. It's not what we can do to expand the economic pie, but what we can

do to increase the size of our economic piece.

I come from an agricultural state, and I understand wealth in terms of what we grow every year, what we produce. The same is true of the industrial sector. If you build something, a plant, say, or you invest in a new machine, you take raw materials and put them together, and produce something new. But the trouble is, the tax system creates income—not wealth.

Increasingly, both liberals and conservatives are reaching the same conclusion: that what we've done is to create a tremendous industry, that has nothing to do with producing, around tax-avoidance and tax-planning.

Examples?

All kinds of professional people have accountants who try to figure out, how do we shelter this person's income by getting him a 50-unit apartment house that gives him a fast write-off? Then, five years down the road, after he's taken the biggest part of the write-off, the accountant says, "Well, we've used the best part of that depreciation. How can we trade up now to get a better asset to give us a fast write-off?" So he trades with somebody else, who's got a 100-unit apartment house, and gets a fast write-off on that. Now a different person owns the 50-unit apartment house. You have all these paper transactions going around and around. That's part of the industry that allows people to avoid taxes.

You're saying the effect of all this is to distort the economic function?

Sure. The people who have planned these favors in the tax law are involved in a kind of social engineering. They stand on the floor of the House every day and insist on measures they claim to despise. They're saying the government ought to stop meddling, that the government ought to get out of this business. But every day these same people are in the Ways and Means Committee trying to engineer some new way for somebody to do something because they think it's a good idea. All these inducements combine to build a tax industry that persuades us to do things that are not productive.

Are mergers and acquisitions a function of the tax system?

I think so. One study, for example, showed that when you compare all corporations to the 100 largest, the 100 largest pay a lower net percentage of income taxes than do all the rest. The larger you are, the less you pay percentage-wise.

You see a company that is enormously profitable. Say it's got a \$200 million profit. What's the company's first reaction to that? How do we shelter this profit? So it begins acting just like the professional with the 50-unit apartment building. It looks for a plant with a quick write-off or a carry-back. The company purchases it and gets the benefit of that carry-back to shelter the profit. It's a way of getting bigger.

The tax system can persuade a winner to buy a loser if a loser offers the winner enough tax advantages.

How would your proposal work?

If you broaden the tax base, you would be able to reduce the rates. Instead, the Congress narrows the base. We start with one page and say we're going to tax income, and spend the next 60 volumes trying to describe what all the exceptions are. But we should get rid of a lot of those exceptions and preferences and exclusions, and instead say that income is income, and ask you to pay one of four or five rates, ranging from 8 percent to 14 percent of your income. I just think you can simplify it so much more than we've done. You could have a similar type of tax on corporations. In fact, I'm not totally at odds with those who want full integration of the corporate system so that you don't have a corporate income tax. Instead, flow all that money through to the shareholders and make

sure it's taxed.

Incidentally, I think Jack Kemp and some of those folks might reach the same conclusions I have on income tax. It is highly unfair, ridiculous, and the storm clouds are gathering over the tax system which one day will wash it away. It's going to erode faster now, as a result of the new tax bill. In 1960, corporations paid 23 percent of the U.S. income tax. By 1985, they'll pay 7 percent. And you know, there are only two groups who fund America: people, and the corporations who employ them. If corporations don't pay taxes, people make up the difference.

And if you look at the rules and regulations, there isn't any greater burden placed on the American people than the burden to fill out their tax forms for government. We've turned what should be a very simple civic duty into an enormously complex burden that you have to pay experts to help you with. I just dread starting on it myself.

You're saying that if we changed the tax system, we could reduce rates and have enough money to run the country?

Well, we'd destroy one of the most incredibly wasteful industries that has ever been built in the United States, and that's the tax-avoidance "paper industry." We could start training more engineers and fewer lawyers. That's the direction the Japanese are going in. The maxim of a

Is our tax system worth saving? A moderately progressive income tax, with no exemptions, would be fairer.

good tax system ought to be that it is simple and fair. We now turn what ought to be a simple civic duty into an incredible nightmare for people and business. It is really stupid. There are no discussions about fairness. We actually start with the contention that it is unfair, and then go on to use the tax system to stimulate behavior by this or that group. Look at the president. He's going to create urban-enterprise zones by using the tax system. Here is this fellow who is a great believer in the free market and what's his plan for American cities? To use the tax system to persuade corporations to do things they might not otherwise do, by giving them tax benefits. What I'm saying is that we should step back from all of this to a level of incredible simplicity: we've got a government, and we've got to pay for it. The government produces certain things, military goods, transportations, education, medical services. You have to pay for it. The questions are who pays, and how? It can be done very simply. And I don't know whether there is a constituency in Congress, but I know there is a constituency for that across the country.

We never debate on the floor of Congress the extraordinarily large budget represented by tax expenditures. We argue about whether to spend \$10 million for this or \$10 million for that. But we never debate whether we are going to give \$10 million in tax expenditures to Exxon, money which the company otherwise would have to pay. And once that tax expenditure to Exxon is passed, it becomes part of the tax law and remains there forever. It becomes another part of the lawyers' and accountants' relief program. And concurrent with building those volumes of the tax codes, we also fill the enrollments of the law schools and accounting schools. The Japanese, meanwhile, are training engineers and scientists to build better products, and we're wondering why we're getting beaten in the international markets. ■

Alexander Cockburn and James Ridgeway are columnists at the Village Voice, where a longer version of this interview first appeared.

PERSPECTIVES

Deterrence is a mean illusion

Michael Parenti

THE GOVERNMENT IS PREPARING to spend hundreds of billions over the next few years to strengthen our nuclear defense system, but the truth is, there is no such thing as nuclear defense. Nor is there such a thing as nuclear deterrence in any strict meaning of the term.

Military technology changes the nature of war, including the offense-defense balance. In World War I, the machine gun was the unanswerable defensive weapon, leading to the bloody stalemate of trench warfare. In a nuclear world war defense will disappear as both belligerents attack almost simultaneously.

There are cold war intellectuals who made their careers writing scenarios for nuclear war. Let's join their macabre company for a moment: Suppose the United States were to strike first, destroying 99 percent, or all but 40, of the estimated 4,000 Soviet long-range warheads in their silos. Such a strike would constitute an incredible victory in a conventional war, but with nuclear weapons it is not good enough. Those remaining 40 warheads, some of which have an explosive force 600 times greater than the Hiroshima bomb, along with another hundred or so launched from Soviet submarines would deliver an unfathomably catastrophic retaliation upon the American people.

The non-defensive nature of our nuclear system is no better illustrated than in the way the citizens of Utah opposed the installation of MX missiles in their own backyard, and the similar opposition expressed by Europeans to the installation of new warheads in their countries. If those missiles were to defend them, as a fort might defend us from a band of Apaches, then they should have welcomed such weapons. Instead they act like people who know this "defense system" threatens their security and diminishes their survival chances. Here is a new and strange development in the technology of war: we are endangered by our own weapons.

For the nuclear strategists, the best defense is a strong offense; or more accurately, a strong offense seems to be the

only defense. Defense is achieved by provoking in the minds of one's enemy the anticipation of an obliterating retaliation. This process is called "deterrence." But in the absence of any traditional military defense, how does deterrence work? How does one know when the other side is deterred? Even if they have no intention of starting a war and announce, "We are deterred," how do we know they are not lying in order to put us off guard?

There are other troublesome questions: how do we distinguish between defensive and aggressive measures, since both entail the same military build-up? (Even the construction of bomb shelters by the Soviets, a seemingly purely defensive expediency, is treated by some U.S. strategists as a sign that the USSR is preparing for aggression.) And if either side appears too ready and willing to use its doomsday weapons, will not that heighten the possibility of a desperate pre-emptive attack by the other?

In any case, how can we place our faith in deterrence when our leaders do not? When Secretary of Defense Casper Weinberger talks like a man who is convinced our present deterrence capacity makes almost no impression upon the Soviets, and when he announces that the Soviet military build-up "over more than 21 years" is evidence of their conviction that the next war is "winnable" and this "assumption...underlies all of their thinking," and when he says there is a "serious and very imminent danger" of a Soviet military threat, what are we to make of this? If our leaders are of this mind, what chance is there for peace?

The ironic thing about deterrence is that while purportedly a realistic policy that refuses to place naive trust in the enemy, it actually rests on a fragile system of mutual trust—a trust that both sides accept deterrence, that both are in fact deterred and that both believe the other is deterred. *For deterrence is predicated not so much on what is real as on what we think is real.* That is why the bellicose posturing and incessant anti-Soviet rhetoric issuing from the Reaganite leadership are so frightening to so many people here and abroad. The belligerency upsets not only the balance of arms but the more encompassing psychological balance needed to keep both sides assured of

the peaceful intentions of the other—and thus deterred.

On several recent occasions, in 1979 and 1980, military computers erroneously indicated that the Soviet Union had launched submarine and land-based missiles against the United States. In each instance, those in command refused to call for a retaliatory strike because they knew better than to believe the "evidence" produced by their multi-billion dollar alert systems. They rose above their strange technology and fell back upon their personal notions about political reality.

But these notions are shaped by the political climate they live in, by the opinions of peers, the warnings and cries uttered by leaders, and the impressions gleaned from the media. In today's climate, when Dr. Strangeloves in high places fill the air with the talk of war and with images of an impending Soviet aggression, what will be the reactions and instant judgments of those otherwise sane but fallible persons who preside over an insane and fallible technology, and who must in a matter of minutes decide whether to blow up the world?

The people need their own "deterrence force." They cannot trust leaders, be they Democrats or Republicans, who walk out on SALT talks, who push for ever greater arms escalations, who refuse to sign a pledge not to be the first to use nuclear weapons, leaders who ignore the Soviet proposal to ban nuclear weapons from outer space, and who believe in the winnability of nuclear war but who then, for propaganda purposes, ascribe this grotesque view to the Kremlin.

Peace and security will come not with MX missiles and neutron bombs but with the continued growth in the international anti-war opposition that is so visible in Europe and emerging in our own nation, causing the Reaganites to retreat from their self-tantalizing preoccupations with war. Peace is assured only when we can create a genuine climate for it. A determined, active, mass movement for detente and mutual disarmament is our best hope—our only real deterrence. ■

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Michael Parenti is a visiting fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies and the author of books and articles on American political life.

This book describes young working-class migrants to the Sunbelt, and examines the growing conflict between classes as jobs for young people become harder to find.

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INPRINT

AMERICAN CULTURE

Left historians take the pulse of people's history



The BALTIMORE VOICES project raised questions about the accuracy of oral history.

Presenting the Past: History and the Public

Radical History Review,
445 West 59th St., NY, NY
10019

No. 25 (October, 1981), 192 pp.
\$5 (annual 3-issue subscription
\$14.00)

By Alfred Young

With this issue devoted to "Presenting the Past: History and the Public," the eight-year-old *Radical History Review* initiates a double task: "to report on, learn from and assess the diverse products of the 'people's history' movement of recent years," and to offer "critical analysis of the myths and distortions that are offered as history," whether from scholarly sources, "TV docudramas, corporate funded museums [or] Hollywood extravaganzas."

They are off to a superb start. The critiques are sophisticated, well-researched and pungent.

Equally refreshing, the assessments of "people's history" challenge assumptions, contributing to a long-overdue dialogue about its goals.

What are the sources of the "myths and distortions"? Not so much the far right, several essays suggest, as the assumptions of liberals and conservatives. TV docudramas, Eric Breitbart points out, are brought to us not only by network moguls and corporate sponsors but by producers with liberal credentials like David Susskind and David Wolper who feel that upbeat endings take precedence over historical accuracy. Wolper and Warner Communications for instance plan a docudrama of the novel *Hanta Yo*, which Patricia Albers and William R. James argue convincingly is "the story of John D. Rockefeller in a war-bonnet" with scant resemblance to Sioux life.

America's two most popular outdoor museums, Greenfield Village and Colonial Williams-

burg, Michael Wallace makes clear in "Visiting the Past," were developed and controlled by the Fords and Rockefellers respectively. Others have pointed out the way Colonial Williamsburg "pickled the past." Wallace draws a sharp bead on the way its presentation consciously reflected the conservative values of its sponsors. When Williamsburg finally "discovered" slavery, it set the story of the slave alongside that of the planter in a framework of "pluralism" that shied away from class relations. Another version of this pluralism is the Smithsonian Museum's "Nation of Nations" exhibit, which Barbara Melosh and Christina Simmons contend, in glorifying America's many ethnic strands, results in "the denial of persisting inequality" and "the invisibility of gender."

The three major articles on "people's history" focus on oral history. Because history and memory is peculiarly fractured in

contemporary American life, Michael Frisch points out, "the process of historical memory is itself a subject for memory." Marcel Ophuls' documentary film of Frenchmen remembering (and distorting) the Nazi occupation, *The Sorrow and the Pity*, and Studs Terkel's *Hard Times*, properly understood as a "memory book" of the Depression, cope with this problem. Some left historians, on the other hand, assume "that once the people can be put in touch with their own history," their "false consciousness" will be dispelled. Oral history, argues Frisch, cannot be "presented for consumption as if its meaning was self-evident."

Sonya Michel raises the same question of the three deservedly popular films based on the oral histories of women workers and women organizers, *Union Maids*, *With Babies and Banners* and *Rosie the Riveter*. Accounts by oral history subjects can be "partial, fragmentary, idiosyncratic and sometimes—deliberately or unintentionally—misleading." The filmmaker as historian therefore has to devise techniques that will "locate" testimony critically in an historic context. She asks questions other viewers have raised—how representative were the women who were chosen? What were their political ties? What were the links between the left and the labor movement? Lyn Goldfarb of *With Babies and Banners* concedes that the "tension between what was historically accurate and what was visually best" was resolved on occasion in favor of what was "appealing."

Linda Shopes confronts with candor the problem of community residents as oral historians based on her experience in the Baltimore Neighborhood Heritage Project. "What do we mean when we say we want people to do their own history?" she says. Do we want what historians or the people think is important? And what is the best way of "re-

turning" such history to the neighborhoods? The project created a well-received play, *Baltimore Voices*, performed by professionals but devised no mechanism to follow up the "half-formed feelings and ideas that might have been roused by it."

Other articles call for closer attention to children's history books (some are breaking out of the stereotypes, writes Joshua Brown), and to the professional "public history" movement (perhaps more diverse than portrayed by Howard Green). And there are reports—unfortunately too brief to be instructive—in a section called "People's History Around the World."

Working in different fields, the essayists contribute to a much-needed vision of common goals. We need projects, writes Frisch, that will help people make their memories of the past "active and alive as opposed to mere objects of collection." Michel, a filmmaker, calls for films that "stimulate critical consciousness," and not only pride. Local history projects, Shopes argues, will have to "link up" with community organizations if they are to have a continuing impact. And if museums are to convey a sense of "human agency," write Melosh and Simmons, "we must appeal to the viewer as a historical actor, not as a spectator or hero worshipper."

If *Radical History Review* can sustain this quality in its ongoing efforts, it could build for the U.S. what its sister journal, *History Workshop*, has done for Britain: a movement that brings into dialogue the many people who are hammering out "alternative" histories.

Alfred Young teaches history at Northern Illinois University. His most recent article, "George Robert Twelves Times, 1742-1840: A Boston Shoemaker and the Memory of the American Revolution," is in the October, 1981 William and Mary Quarterly.

Drama

Continued from page 24

They may evoke in an audience's consciousness the need for analysis but they don't set out as one.

I feel that people know what is true and what is not true. I don't believe that TV is used as moving wallpaper—people are still making discriminations and judgments. Eighty to 90 percent of what is put out, including and perhaps especially news on current affairs programs, tell lies. It is, therefore, a left playwright's duty to tell the truth, to talk about issues that are systematically denied an airing in the media.

I've just written a play called *Country, A Tory Story*. In it I'm working within what we in England call the country house genre. The play is set during the election months of 1945. I take an upper class family of brewers and examine the struggle for power that goes on within that family. At one very important level it works like a family saga, but at its most potent level it is a critique both of a class and of a genre. It's complex, both Chekhovian and Brechtian. You draw people in along the line of the genre and then you demolish the myth of that genre, and leave people stranded, and they have to regroup. So it's an interesting and upsetting process.

Comedians work that way as well. People thought in the first

act that they were there to get some cheap laughs at the expense of these people and then they suddenly found that every time they laughed they were being punished for it. They were forced to look at the content of their laughter, at its ideological meaning.

OCCUPATIONS takes place in Turin in the 1920s and features Gramsci. Is this play an affirmation of Gramsci's position?

It's a critique of socialist humanism. It is Gramsci who is beaten by the end of the play; not Radek (the agent of the Comintern). I've set two valid, ideological stances at maximum tension, set them vibrating through the play as they vibrate through my life. The Leninist principle and the Gramscian principle still have terrific resonance on different parts of my person, imagination and sensibility. I'm looking for a dialectical transformation of those two positions into one.

Who was the major intellectual influence on your work?

Well, Edward Thompson lives a life of real scale. He's a big man who has got social forces charging through him, just like John Reed. I met Edward in 1957 when he was working on *The Making of the English Working Class*, and he's been a major influence and close personal friend since then. He's the man I admire above all others in my life.

Al Auster and Leonard Quart are New York writers on cultural affairs whose work has appeared in *Cineaste*, *Socialist Review* and other places.

HISTORY

Luxemburg's passion for political happiness

Comrade and Lover: Rosa Luxemburg's Letters to Leo Jogiches
Ed. and trans. by Elzbieta Ettinger
MIT Press, 200 pp., \$4.95 paper

By Jo-Ann Mort

Rosa Luxemburg incorporated the contradictions of her age. Unlike so many dedicated political activists who, in their commitment to a truly "human" future, banish all traces of humanity from their own lives, Luxemburg was determined to live a full life of politics, culture and love.

"Your letters contain nothing, but nothing except for the Workers' Cause," she wrote to Jogiches in 1894. "Even that I wouldn't mind if besides, despite it, there was a human being behind it, a soul, an individual." Luxemburg stood strong against Lenin's claim (still believed by too many leftists) that a revolutionary mustn't listen to too much beautiful music, for fear of becoming soft. "Despite everything you told me before I left," she wrote in 1898, "I kept on harping on my worn-out tune, making claims for personal happiness. Yes, I do have a cursed longing for happiness and am ready to haggle for my daily portion with the stubbornness of a mule.... But accuse me of egoism, and you miss the mark."

Luxemburg met Jogiches in 1890, when she was 20 and he was 23. For the next 17 years, they were to attempt a "perfect life," as "comrades and lovers," as Luxemburg noted. While struggling for social justice, they'd attempt "to shape a human being out of each other." Ultimately, they failed to be both lovers and comrades. By 1907, they were comrades only. By 1919, both of them were dead, assassination victims during the abortive German revolution.

Yet to see their individual lives as failures is to miss the point. Luxemburg's letters to Jogiches—his letters to her have been lost—are a testament to the struggle for love and justice.

To find Luxemburg's example inspiring is not to say that she was exemplary. In an age when no models of a socialist government or state existed, Luxemburg espoused many ideas that, with hindsight, we can see to have been illusions. Probably foremost among them was her belief that the coming of socialism would end oppression of all kinds. Social questions and national questions were dismissed in her insistence on a pure class analysis of society.

Outside the ranks.

"A woman and a Jew," remarks Elzbieta Ettinger in her perceptive introduction, "Luxemburg personified two oppressed classes." But Ettinger goes on to show how, in both cases, Luxemburg chose to fight outside the ranks.

For Jews who attempted to form separate Jewish movements, Luxemburg had nothing but scorn. "To me," she wrote in 1917, "the poor victims of the rubber plantations in Putu-

mayo, the Negroes in Africa... are equally close." Luxemburg's own Jewish identity, like that of many other revolutionaries of the time, was submerged in her struggle for international socialism. She believed that nationalism, as well as anti-semitism, would wither away in a socialist economy.

In this belief, she was grossly mistaken. The 20th century proved to be a rude awakening to Jews who had fought for the dissolution of national identities. As Ettinger points out, Luxemburg's comrades were buried in Hitler's concentration camps or Stalin's Gulag.

Luxemburg and her associates

the very premises of the existing order. The role of the party, in her view, was not to give orders to an intellectually passive working class, but to encourage, to nourish that revolutionary consciousness when it appeared, and to follow the workers' lead in the many cases when the workers showed themselves to be ahead of the party.

As Ettinger points out, Luxemburg welcomed the revolution of 1917, but with the strong qualification that some of the measures employed by Lenin, if he persisted in them, would turn out to be "worse than the disease it was supposed to cure."

Socialism, she wrote, "by its

will both work, and our life will be perfect. We will be happy, we must." But their situation, reflected in these letters, never allowed them to be happy. Her one-time mentor, Jogiches could never adjust to his pupil's outdistancing him intellectually. Nor could he respond to her passionate, emotional demands. Luxemburg implored Jogiches to give up his "rocky heart," to come live with her "like other people."

Political work kept them apart. In one letter, she dreams of what life with Jogiches would be like:

"Our own small apartment, our own nice furniture, our own library; quiet and regular work, walks together, an opera from time to time, a small, very small, circle of friends who can sometimes be invited for dinner; every year a summer vacation in the country, one month with absolutely no work! ...And perhaps even a little, a very little baby? Will this never be allowed? Nev-

lessly savaged his own body, think how I feel," she wrote. "Think how furious I am day in day out, year after year. Helplessly, I watch you do the same thing to your soul. You, too, are wasting yourself."

By 1907, she gave up pleading; she began living with the 22-year-old son of her old friend and comrade, Clara Zetkin. She continued to correspond with Jogiches on political matters, letters that bore neither salutation or signature.

Friends again.

After Luxemburg's imprisonment in 1915, she and Jogiches once again became friends. "On Nov. 10, 1918," writes Ettinger, "the day after she was set free, Luxemburg was in Berlin. Until her death Jogiches was constantly at her side. The tempests and rancor behind them, their friendship, their spiritual affinity, passed all tests. Now they struggled together for the dream of



were a "unique group, they had no predecessors and hardly any successors. They were all enlightened Europeans, many of them Jews, who appeared in the second half of the 19th century only to disappear with the advent of labor camps, concentration camps, purges and gas ovens," writes Ettinger.

Similarly, Luxemburg viewed the struggle for women's rights, in Ettinger's words, as a "harmful division...that split the international proletariat." But even so, in refusing to elevate the claims of political life over her need to live a full personal life, Luxemburg brought what can be seen as a feminist perspective to her revolutionary stance.

Luxemburg's legacy lives in her critique of Bolshevism. Luxemburg argued against Lenin, who claimed that workers alone could achieve no more than an incomplete, "reformist" consciousness, necessitating the party to act as a vanguard, injecting revolutionary consciousness into the workers' movement from outside. Luxemburg insisted that the workers had proven time and again their capacity to question

very nature, cannot be dictated, introduced by command.... Without general elections, without unrestricted freedom of press and assembly, without a free exchange of opinions, life dies out in every public institution and only bureaucracy remains active. ...In fact, then, it is a clique—certainly a dictatorship, not, however, the dictatorship of the proletariat but that of a handful of politicians." The ghosts of Luxemburg and Lenin hover above Poland today.

"No couple on earth has the chance we have," Luxemburg wrote to Jogiches in 1899. "We

er? Dyodo, do you know what possessed me all of a sudden during a walk in Tiergarten? Without exaggeration! All of a sudden, a little child got under my feet, three or four years old, blonde, in a pretty little dress, and staring at me. A compulsion swelled in me to kidnap the child, to dash home and keep it for my own. Oh, Dyodo, won't I ever have my own baby?"

Jogiches fell into deeper personal agony as Luxemburg gained in personal recognition. "If you feel impotent with rage watching your brother wasting away because he has thought-

their youth—the revolution."

The revolution, of course, was put down. Luxemburg was assassinated by the German Freikorps in January 1919. Jogiches was assassinated two months later, after having pursued Luxemburg's murderers unsuccessfully.

While these letters finally reveal a woman virtually unmatched in her time, Luxemburg was unrelenting in her attempt to live both a full personal and political life.

Jo-Ann Mort, a poet, chairs the New York City local of Democratic Socialists of America.

SYLVIA



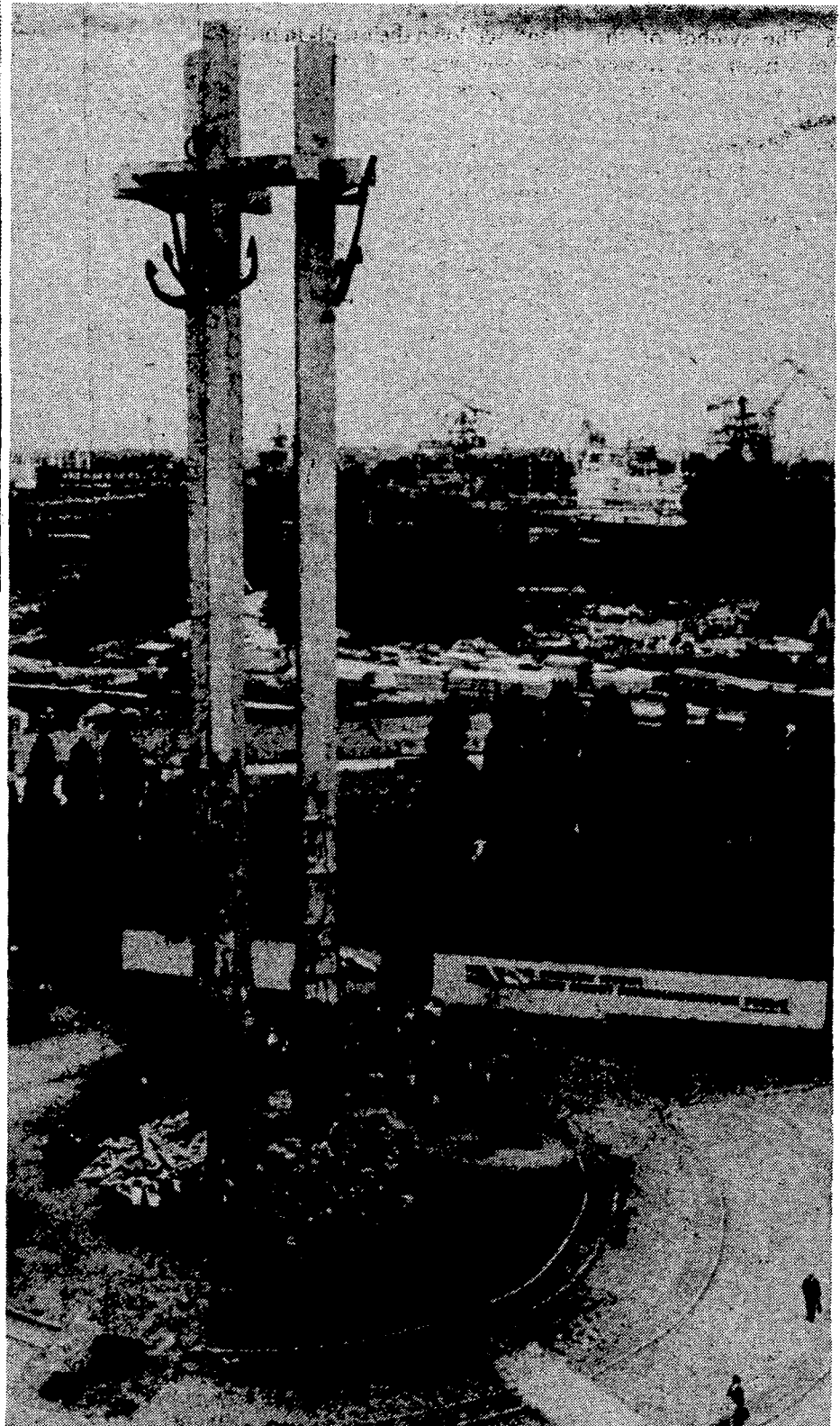
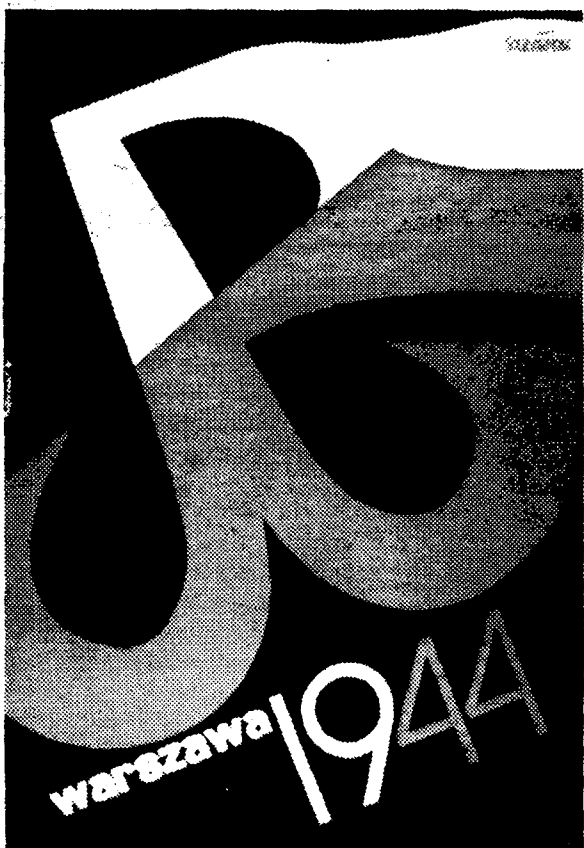
by Nicole Hollander

'44 '56 '68 '70 '76 '80



The movement's graphic art drew on rich imagery from Polish history.

Seeing Solidarity



By Lawrence Weschler

Like its logo, the Polish Solidarity movement came barreling out of a history of struggle in a land where the simple mention of a year summons up a store of common impressions. One of Solidarity's most succinct graphic images consists of a graph—the chart of a heartbeat, perhaps, or a seismograph—a red line coursing horizontally across a white page, throbbing occasionally to jagged verticals, above which are marked the dates 1944, 1956, 1968, 1970 and 1976—a litany of failed national rebellions. As the line approaches the present, the verticals become increasingly steep and frequent, and on the other side of 1980, the line opens onto that single word: *Solidarnosc*.

Solidarity's graphic artists could draw on the matrix of succinct images with rich, common associations that Polish history has given them. Take, for example, the phrase "Warsaw 1944." That formula, on a poster that first appeared in August, might initially seem to celebrate the liberation of the city from Nazi occupation by the Soviet army—and the Poles are perfectly content to let the Russians think as much. Every Pole, however, knows that "Warsaw 1944" in fact alludes to the Rebellion, the valiant, tragic attempt of the Polish Home Army, the country's indigenous nationalist Resistance, to liberate the capital in advance of the Soviet arrival. The Soviet army, for its part, stopped dead in its tracks on the other side of the Vistula once the Rebellion began in August 1944 and let the Nazis liquidate the nationalists for them before they finally came in to liberate the city's ruins. The symbol of the Home Army, from 1939 to well beyond 1944, was *Ł*. This graffiti was scrawled on walls throughout Poland during the Nazi occupation and in the first several months of the Soviet counter-occupation. *PW* stood for *Pol-ska Walczaca*: "Poland is still fighting"—fighting both the Nazis and the Soviets. But the image itself summoned an even deeper association, for it suggested Poland anchored—the anchor being a longtime token of Polish Catholicism. We are speaking of a country where, across a tortured history, Catholicism and nationalism have blended into a synchronous passion.

The theme of the anchor symbol achieved a particularly rich development during the last decade. In December 1970, a work stoppage at the Gdansk shipyards was quashed in a sudden massacre: thousands were injured and hundreds killed as Polish soldiers fired on Polish workers. The memory of that traumatic event was officially suppressed—virtually ignored in contemporary journals, glossed over in history texts—but it was sustained throughout Poland, as most such memories were, through word of mouth, tattered photos passed from hand to hand and the cumulative force of the slightest of gestures. For example, when writing the year "1970," Poles would transubstantiate the "7" into "Ł"; this practice even came to pervade government documents reviewing the period. At the Gdansk cemetery, where mention of the circumstances of the strikers' deaths was forbidden, mourners would mark the grave of a slain worker by hanging a small anchor from the feet of the headstone's traditional crucifix. The anchor provided a startling mirror image of the tiny

crucified Jesus, but it also suggested that this was the grave of a shipbuilder—a welder of anchors—who had died a Christian martyr.

When the workers took up the strike again, in August 1980, one of their first demands was that a fitting memorial to their martyred 1970 colleagues be erected just outside the shipyard, at the very site where the first workers had been shot as they surged out of the gates. The government, its back to the wall, acceded to the demand, and within just three months (as if to mock the government's accusations of low productivity, and in order to be ready for the commemoration of the 10th anniversary of the carnage) the shipworkers themselves raised an extraordinary monument: three gleaming steel crosses, rising 140 feet above the plaza, attached at the arms back-to-back in a triangular configuration, and atop each cross, splayed in anguished crucifixion—an anchor. In the bases of the three crosses, amidst the tangle of steel shards which lead up into the sleek vertical beams, the workers slotted friezes commemorating the triumph of their August rebellion.

For the Poles, if 1970 was the Crucifixion, then 1980 was the Resurrection and the Life.

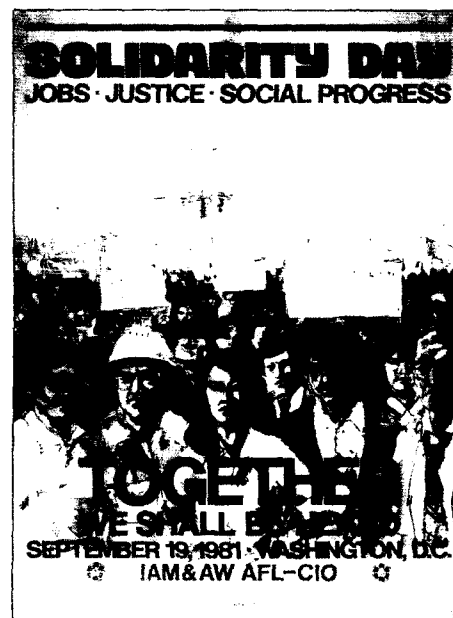
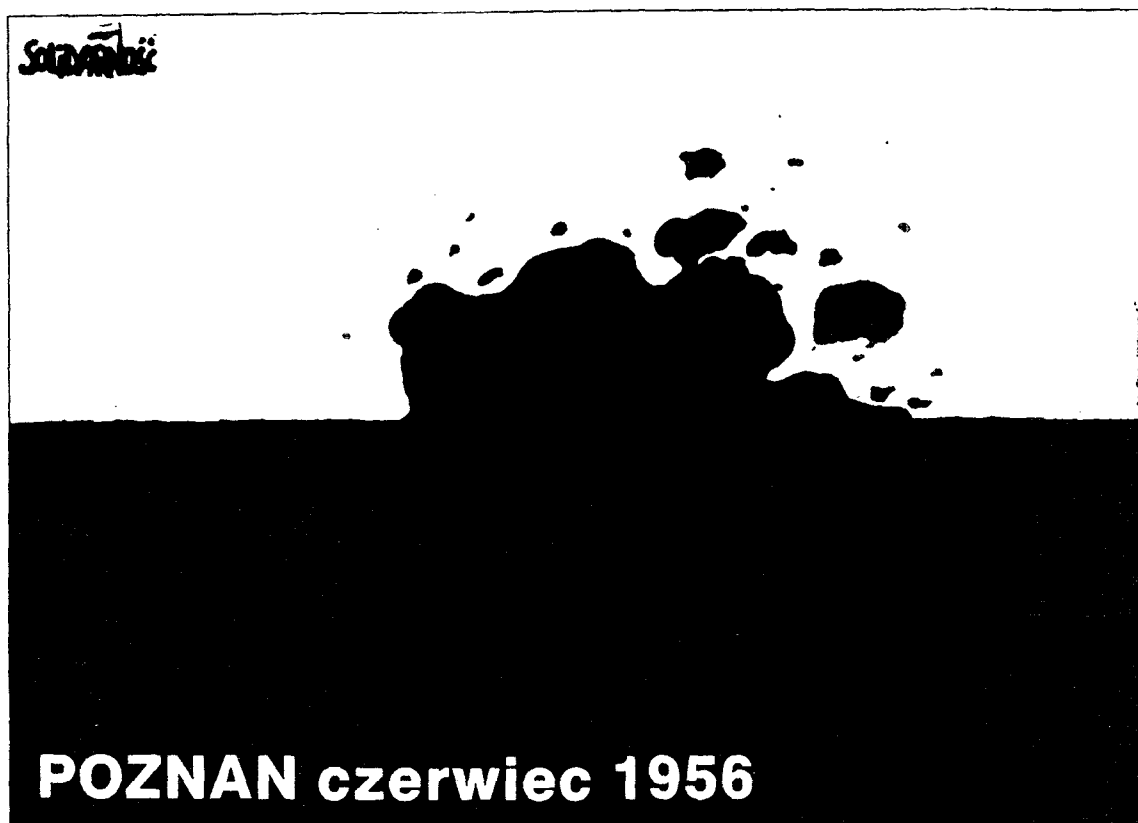
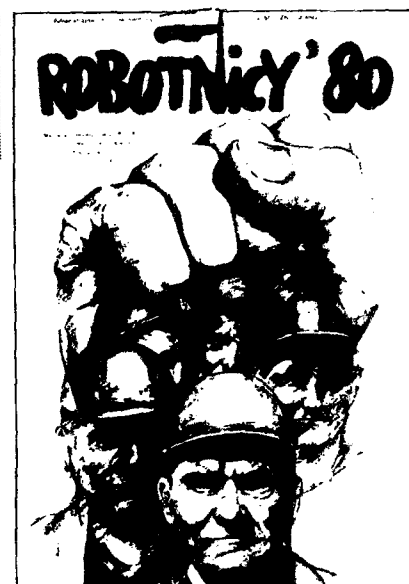
The Polish flag is red and white, and the red stands for blood: the blood of patriotic martyrs and the blood of Christ, which, for Poles, is the same blood.

In 1956, the deStalinizing thaw was fast reaching floodtide at the country's periphery. On June 28, in Poznan, a proletarian stronghold in west-central Poland, workers from the infamous Cegielski locomotive factory (site of many 19th-century confrontations) set down their tools in protest over wages, food supplies and working conditions and marched on the town's central Stalin Square. The Polish army was called out, and by the time the violence had subsided, hundreds of workers had been injured and 70 killed. There happened to be an international trade fair in the city at the time, so there were many photographers taking countless pictures, some of which soon took on an underground, hand-to-hand existence.

Of all these images, one in particular has been seared into the Polish national subconscious. When you mention Poznan to Poles today, they will tell you about the crowd of workers led by the young woman in a white dress who was carrying a Polish flag back into the town square. The white of the flag was stained red: it had just been dipped in the blood of a fallen worker.

What is interesting about this memory is that everyone tells you that it is the woman who was bearing the flagpole, whereas in fact when you look at the photograph—which these days exists in omnipresent, openly displayed profusion throughout Poland—it is clear that the woman was carrying nothing at all, and that a worker behind her was holding the flag. This suggests the way in which people are prepared for images—in which images are prepared for people—by the context of prior images. For there is indeed an image—by this time almost an archetype—of a woman leading a crowd over a barricade while holding a flag aloft. She is *Liberty Leading the People*, as depicted by Eugene Delacroix in 1830. (The composition of these two pictures—the lower-left-to-upper-right diagonal

Continued on following page



1 MAJA SWIETO SOLIDARNOSCI ROBOTNICZEJ

Continued from previous page
al of the advancing crowd which in turn is advancing from left to right—is remarkably similar.) I am convinced that this particular photograph, rather than any of the innumerable others taken that day, was the image that Poles came to remember because in a strange sort of way they already knew it by heart.

Nowadays, Solidarity's graphic artists can in turn rely on the communal memory of that photographic image in composing their own iconography. The poster that Solidarity published in June 1981 on the 35th anniversary of the Poznan massacre, perhaps one of the most effective broadsides they have yet produced, consists simply of the legend "Poznan June 1956" superimposed over a bloodstained Polish flag. Actually, the flag is not really stained. Rather, the red of the lower half of the flag becomes an abstract form bleeding into the white of the upper half.

Why are the posters of Solidarity, and Poland generally, so forceful and so vital? What gives them such authority? Is it just that the Polish graphic artists have this context of common images to draw upon? Is it possible to discuss the strength of these posters in purely esthetic terms? Of course, the answer is no.

The authority of political art, finally, exists at best in proportion to the authority of the politics it advances. In order to work political images have to command authority, but they can only realize the authority and authenticity of the political context out of which they arise. Solidarity's graphic artists therefore have two things going for them: a legacy of common images (flag, cross, fist, blood, crowd, face) and a politics with author-

ity. Graphic artists working in the U.S. these days don't have either, at least not in the same terms.

Consider a recent American effort, one of the most widely distributed posters advertising the AFL-CIO's Sept. 19, 1981, Solidarity Day protest march in Washington, D.C. Compare the faces in this image with those in the poster for Robotnicy '80, the remarkable documentary on the August 1980 negotiations. It is not the relative esthetic merits of the two posters that I am trying to consider, but rather the situation within which each was produced, and specifically the desperate limitations of the American situation for political artists. To begin with, there's the event itself. This is a rally being held by a huge labor confederation which barely one month earlier had stood idly by, paralyzed, as the president of the United States gutted one of its member unions (12,000 air traffic controllers were fired on Aug. 5, and the AFL-CIO did precisely nothing). Is it perhaps the humiliation of that episode that we see behind some of the brittle imitations of sternness on the faces of the workers? This organization projects virtually no authoritative politics of its own—the banners in this posters background are blank. Indeed, the best it can do is cannibalize someone else's politics: Solidarity Day? Who's kidding whom?

"When you don't know where you're going, any path will take you there," or so claimed the old Talmudic masters. Maybe any color will get you there, too. For the AFL-CIO poster the artist chose green (green?) for the printing on the otherwise black and white poster. About the only thing you can say for green in

this context is that it is conspicuously not red, white or blue. Compare, for example, Solidarity's May Day 1981 poster, which deploys the same kind of image: a crowd of grimly determined workers faced head on. Solidarity's crowd is their flag. In retrospect, the American progressive movement during the '60s made perhaps one of its greatest mistakes when it took to burning the national flag. It's true, the government almost forced them into it, cornered them into that kind of national self-loathing. But today you can see the difference. In Poland, dissidents can deploy the national flag as their own. In the U.S., social critics have lost that birthright. A revolutionary flag has been appropriated by the society's most reactionary elements.

In America today, products—not politics—are granted strong images. Americans do not even share a sense of a common past. In Poland, it's not just years that summon a common response—it's dates on the yearly calendar: May 1 (May Day); May 3 (the promulgation of Poland's first constitution, 1791); June 28 (Poznan 1956); August 1 (the launching of the Warsaw Rebellion, 1944); August 15 (a Polish national army turns back an invading Soviet force, 1920); August 31 (victory in Gdansk, 1980); September 1 (the Nazis invade Poland, 1939). Each of these dates is honored, is an occasion for celebration or mourning, for poster-making. In America, we couldn't even sustain November 11 as Armistice Day, an occasion for honoring the dead of World War I; one war later, we diffused it into Veteran's Day (honoring all veterans, living and dead, from all our wars); and a couple of wars after that, it was no longer even November 11 but rather the nearest Monday or Friday, an empty excuse for all the potential profits of a three-day weekend. Is it any wonder that America political artists have so few authoritative images to go on?

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Lawrence Weschler is the author of *Solidarity: Poland in the Season of Its Passion and Seeing Is Forgetting the Name of the Thing One Sees*, a biography of California artist Robert Irwin. This article is excerpted from an article that first appeared in the February issue of *ArtForum*.

Transit

Continued from page 8
elimination of federal operating subsidies will mean "all our great ideas about serving all the people have been jettisoned. We are not even going to have service in some suburbs at all.... And if the economy gets any worse, we'll have to dismantle part of the existing system."

Many people in smaller cities, too, will be forced to buy an automobile or just stay at home if operating subsidies to their local transit district are stopped. Already in the Ohio cities of Xenia, Beaver Creek and Fairborn—near Dayton—people unable to afford a car are without a means of public transportation. When a half-cent sales tax was defeated for the second time by voters last November, the local transit district was liquidated.

"Who has been hurt," says Philip Bass, former director of the Greene County Transit Board, "are those you seldom hear from—the disenfranchised. We were facilitating students, the poor and the elderly. That was part of the problem. We couldn't convince most people that public transit was important."

Places like Phoenix, where the local transit system will benefit from revenues generated by a new Arizona state lottery, and Iowa City, a college town where

public support of mass transit is high, will weather the transportation budget cuts in good shape. But in most cities, the loss of federal aid will bring difficult decisions. Besides fare hikes, service reductions, lobbying for local tax increases or throwing in the towel altogether, transit systems squeezed by financial problems have one other alternative—balancing the budget on the backs of their employees. Chicago recently laid off 244 bus drivers and another 144 workers got their pink slips on March 19. And in Memphis, local politicians are suggesting wage concessions as one way to avert a transit shutdown.

If the Reagan transportation budget is passed by Congress, John Rowland, president of the Amalgamated Transit Union, estimates that 10 percent of the 160,000 membership will be out of work. The United Transportation Union and other unions would also be hard hit in an industrial sector already suffering job losses at the hands of airlines, railroads, private bus carriers and Amtrak.

"All the past administrations," Rowland notes, "whether Republican or Democratic, were proponents of mass transportation because it builds strong communities; for ecological reasons; for energy reasons; and to keep more traffic off the streets. This is the first administration that wants to turn things back."

Jay Walljasper is a Chicago-based free-lance journalist.

DIRECTORY

The Directory is published to facilitate contact with organizations frequently referred to in the pages of *In These Times*. Each organization has paid a fee for its listing.

Association for Workplace Democracy
1747 Connecticut Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20009

The Citizens Party-National Office
525 13th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20004

The Citizens Party of Illinois
109 N. Dearborn, Suite 603
Chicago, IL 60602
(312) 332-2066

Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy
120 Maryland Ave., NE
Washington, DC 20002

C.O.I.N.-Consumers Opposed to Inflation in the Necessities
2000 P Street, NW, Suite 413
Washington, DC 20036

DSOC-Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee
853 Broadway, Room 801
New York, NY 10003

Midwest Academy
600 West Fullerton Ave.
Chicago, IL 60614

National Center for Economic Alternatives
2000 P Street, NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20036

NAM-New American Movement
3244 N. Clark St.
Chicago, IL 60657

New Patriot Alliance/DSOL
343 S. Dearborn, Room 305
Chicago, IL 60604

Socialist Party
1011 N. 3rd St., No. 201
Milwaukee, WI 53203

CALENDAR

Use the calendar to announce conferences, lectures, films, events, etc. The cost is \$20.00 for two insertions and \$10.00 for each additional insert, for copy of 40 words or less (additional words are 35¢ each). Payment must accompany your announcement, and should be sent to the attention of Paul Ginger.

WASHINGTON, DC

April & May

The Washington School presents "The Other Side of Town" Lecture Series. Harry Magdoff and Paul Sweezy April 23; Studs Terkel May 14. The All-Day Seminar Series. "Investigative Reporting" with John Dinges April 10; "Direct Mail and Politics" with Richard Parker April 23. Call Institute for Policy Studies (202) 234-9382.

LOS ANGELES, CA

April 15-17

California Democratic Agenda Conference—to build a labor-left democratic party within the Democratic Party. Speakers include Michael Harrington, Tom Hayden, Maxine Waters, Bricklayers President John Joyce, Stanley Sheinbaum, Ruth Goldway, Augustus Hawkins, Jimmy Herman, Elinor Glenn, Faoul Teilhet, Deirdre English, Jim Lawson, and many more. Friday night, 7:30 p.m., University Hilton, 3540 S. Figueroa; Saturday, 9 a.m. USC Town and Gown. Registration \$15 student/senior/unemployed \$10. For information and advance

registration: Democratic Agenda, P.O. Box 1300, Long Beach, CA 90801. (213) 775-6085.

NEW YORK, NY

April 17

"Protest and Survive: Poland, El Salvador and Disarmament." An all-day conference featuring Dan Smith, Chairperson of the Committee for European Nuclear Disarmament (END), Daniel Singer, author of *The Road to Gdansk* and Robert Armstrong of NACLA and co-author of *El Salvador: The Face of Revolution*. Morning session begins 10:00 a.m. Afternoon workshops with panelists Paul Robeson, Jr.; Stanley Aronowitz; Marta Petrusiewicz, Maryknoll Sister; Darlene Cuccinello; Craig Livingston and Janet Shenk from 1-5 p.m. Riverside Church, 120th & Riverside Drive. \$4.00. Evening party. For advance tickets or to contribute, contact Solidarity Support Campaign, 301 W. 150th St., NYC 10025. (212) 222-9703.

April 18

Celebrate 45th anniversary Veterans Abraham Lincoln Brigade, Sunday, April 18, 12 noon, Statler Hotel, NYC. Hear Cong. Ted Weiss, civil liberties attorney Leonard Boudin, call for support of democracy in Spain, no return to McCarthyism, no intervention in El Salvador. Dinner, admission, entertainment, \$25. Tickets from VALB, 799 Bway, NYC, 10003. Or call (212) OR 4-5552, 11 AM-6 PM.

June 21-July 2

Conference: "The Crisis in Hegemony: Recon-

structing a Left Public." Sponsors: *Social Text*, *New Political Science*, Marxist Literary Group. Sessions/room/board, Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts. Info/registration, c/o Doris Sommer, Amherst College, Amherst 01002; (413) 542-2396.

June 24-July 9

War Resisters League Training Program for Organizers: The program blends workshops on basic organizing skills with those dealing with political theory, and various issues emphasizing nonviolence. Cost is \$125. Application deadline April 30. Write WRL, 339 Lafayette Street.

BERKSHIRES

April 8

The Berkshire Forum opens a new season of weekend vacation workshops, combine expertly led discussions of controversial issues with exhilarating country recreation. Modern lodge, gorgeous setting, luscious meals. Write Berkshire Forum, Stphentown, NY 12168 or call (518) 733-5497.

April 23-25

The Berkshire Forum presents Synos Mangazva discussing "The Continuing Struggle in Southern Africa." For information on this and subsequent weekend vacation workshops, write Berkshire Forum, Box 124, Stphentown, NY 12168, or call (518) 733-5497.

CHICAGO

April 24

An evening with the real Solidarity. Oppose martial law in Poland and U.S. intervention in El Salvador. What were Solidarity's aims? What will be its future? Trade unionists, writers and artists speak out on Poland. Speakers include: Daniel Singer, author of *The Road to Gdansk* and a leading authority on Poland; Robin Semer, Chicago Religious Task Force on El Salvador, recently returned from Nicaragua; Paul Robeson, Jr., Kurt Vonnegut; Ed Sadlowski; Gary Fields, attended Solidarity Congress; Ursula Wislanka on the role of women in Solidarity; Bronislaw Mistal, Solidarity member; Ralph Schoenman, American Workers and Artists for Solidarity. Tickets \$3.50. 7:00 p.m. at Holy Trinity High School Auditorium, 1443 West Division St., parking available. Sponsored by American Workers and Artists for Solidarity with Solidarnosc. For more information, call Gary Fields (312) 384-7464 or Lisa DiCaprio (312) 227-2229.

May 1

The Democratic Socialists of America Chicago local will hold its annual Debs-Thomas dinner on Saturday, May 1 at the McCormick Inn. This year's honoree is long-time DSOC and UAW activist Carl Shier. The cost of the dinner is \$25 and reservations and payments should be made in advance. Individuals or groups may be listed in the ad book as patrons for an additional \$25. Please send checks payable to the Debs-Thomas Dinner Committee, 201 N. Wells, Suite 1216, Chicago, IL 60606. All proceeds from the dinner will be used to fund DSA work in Chicago in the coming year.

Amtrak

Continued from page 13

the automobile, an Amtrak official notes, "I could think of three or four large companies in Detroit who wonder where the hell everybody went." Amtrak's popularity has been the greatest obstacle to repeated attempts to dismantle the rail system.

Nor can the U.S.' singular anti-rail approach be attributed to its sick economy. Europe and Japan face the same inflationary pressures that plague the U.S. While some governments are retrenching on their rail commitments, as is Britain

under Thatcher, none are contemplating reductions of the magnitude advocated by Washington.

Uniquely American, however, is the underlying commitment to a private sector transportation system, and the subsequent antagonism to the tiny nationalized segment that is Amtrak. The governments of Europe and Japan regard their transportation sectors as too vital a component of their national economies to entrust so entirely to the vagaries of the profit motive. Generally, their nationalized railroads enable them to divert profits from the freight side of operations to help subsidize their passenger deficits. In the U.S., on the other hand, Amtrak's precarious budget is drained by payments to the private railroads for the use of their tracks and facilities.

Experts point to a looming transportation crisis in the U.S. The highways are crumbling and the airways are dangerously overcrowded. With 20 percent of the gross national product already going for transportation, it will cost \$900 billion to keep the highway system intact between now and the year 2000. A \$10 billion improved air traffic control system is needed immediately. Nearly half the oil used in the U.S. every day, and one-seventh of that used in the world, is burned by U.S. cars and trucks. And growing numbers of Americans are being priced out of the transportation market. Auto travel now costs 47 cents per mile, and rising airline costs have spelled fewer flights, higher fares on short and medium distance routes, and abandonment of service to many smaller cities.

But even passenger train supporters concede that Amtrak in its present Lilliputian form will have little impact on the transportation imbroglio. The success of Amtrak's enemies in forcing route cuts, rate hikes and downgrading service in general threatens to make their accusations about cost-inefficiencies self-fulfilling. Unless Amtrak can muster sufficient political clout to expand its system, attempts to justify Amtrak on economic grounds alone will become implausible. Then, not even popular support will be enough to deter the wrecking crews. ■ *Joel Parker and Dan Biggs are former chairmen of the Brotherhood of Railway and Airline Clerks local in the San Francisco Bay area.*
Next time: A glimpse at the future of rail passenger service in the U.S.

CLASSIFIED

PUBLICATIONS

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CLASSWORK: A FORUM for Progressive perspectives on public education. Intro issue for SASE, 1207 Harrison St., Philadelphia, PA 19124.

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APRIL, JEWISH CURRENTS, Morris U. Schappes, "40 Years Later—But Not Too Late." Editorial: "El Salvador in Crisis," Jack Nusan Porter, "Soviet Jewish Partisans," Martin Land, "Gays in Concentration Camps." Single copy \$1. Subscription \$10 USA, Jewish Currents, Dept. T, 22 East 17 St., N.Y.C. 10003.

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Stage Left

By Leonard Quart
and Al Auster

TREVOR GRIFFITHS IS AN ENGLISH MARXIST PLAYWRIGHT who writes plays "to show the way society is moving." His play *The Party* was put on at the English National Theatre with Sir Lawrence Olivier and Comedians appeared both in England and on Broadway. He has written a 13-part television series on a Labor Party M.P., Bill Brand, and co-authored the script of *Reds*. His play *Occupations*, dealing with Gramsci and the 1920 workers' occupation of the Turin factories opened for a limited run on March 12 in New York.

What was it like to work with Warren Beatty on *REDS*?

Two people with different backgrounds and different aspirations come together and try to sort out structure and characters, and try to bring into that process quite different considerations, some of them commercial, some of them political. Obviously there are going to be differences. I spent two arduous years working on the screenplay with Warren Beatty. It's probably the single most important work experience I've had. I've learned more about making plays and movies from doing it than from any other work I've done, and I hope to recover for my own historical and sociological imagination a whole area of European and American politics.

What were your intentions when you wrote the script?

I came over to help in the production of *Comedians* in 1976, and in the course of that I was invited to Mike Nichols' wedding, and shared a car from New York to Connecticut with Warren Beatty, who I'd never met. We got on quite well, and a week later I got a phone call from him and he asked, "What do you know about John Reed?"

I said, "I know a bit about John Reed. What do you want to know?" He said, "I don't want to know anything. I've been looking at this guy's life for the last 10 years and I would like to meet and talk."

"Why do you want to do it with me?" I said, and he said, "Because people tell me I'd be a fool not to." He didn't really know my work—he had never seen or read a play of mine. Before I committed myself to *Reds* it took eight months of discussions, mainly transatlantic phone calls. I was finding out what he thought was the nub of the story, and he was finding out whether I could help him. I went to Harvard to the Widener Library [Reed's papers are there] and the first card they had was Warren Beatty, and it predated my appearance by 10 years. So that is the length of commitment this guy had to making the movie.

Why do you think Beatty was so interested in Reed?

I guess you'd call it an obsession. It's some compulsion to make a statement about the way things are. He would be the first person to admit that his impulse is not specifically a political impulse. It's a humanist impulse. He's interested in recovering that area of American history that was very vital and buoyant and about which there is a great deal of mystification and mythology.

What is your feeling about Reed?

The most important thing about Reed is that he's been covered over, and that is not an accident. I always have felt that it is important to recover a usable past for socialist struggle. Now if that's true in Britain with Tom Mann (the labor leader) it has to be true in America with John Reed.

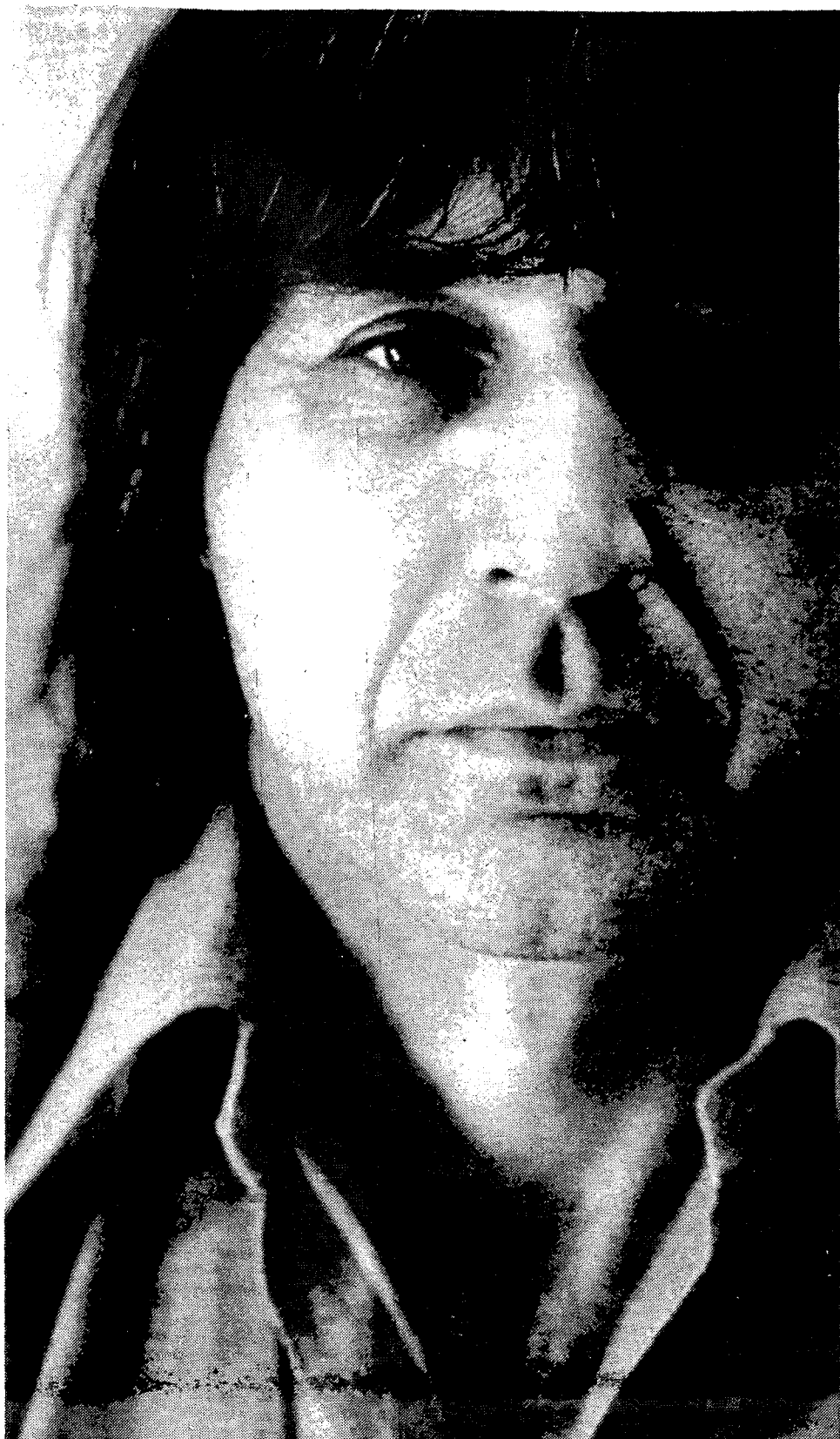
John Reed became a significant cultural figure for the right and the left from the time of his death. He was a symbol of the Popular Front in 1934. You can still see John Reed scrawled up on walls in Mexico. He is now celebrated in the Soviet Union, serving an end that he would not agree with. He was contradictory, he was passionate and in a curious ironic way, heroic. A lot of people didn't like him. They thought him a contentious, bourgeois individualist. There was a lot of pain and a lot of fun in his life. He was involved not only in a political revolution, but in a cultural and sexual revolution as well. He had such a clean commitment to certain things that it makes him very remarkable. I love the guy!

Do you have an obsession with him?

He makes me shiver a bit. But I don't know that I will do anything else about John Reed. Life's very short.

What function does a Marxist playwright have?

I want to challenge the view that Marxist theater can be separated from theater in general. It would be nice to think that the playwright created new audiences, and that he politicized old audiences. I don't know that that's the case and I don't know that that sector of society is in any case critical,



Photographer unknown

because it has to feed into a pyramidal order where ideas and opinions are formed at higher levels and then filtered down to the lower levels. I prefer to speak directly via TV and film to the widest possible audience and to use forms that the widest base of the society is familiar with. I have very little connection with the fringe and avant garde, with talking to a group of one's friends in a basement. Using theater that way is a recipe for political impotence.

Why has there been an explosion of socialist-oriented playwrights in the last few years—for instance Brenton, Hare, Baker—in England?

There are now more than 300 playwrights who are capable of writing good plays in Britain. It's quite incredible. Of those, the vast preponderance are left playwrights of one kind or another. It clearly has something to do with our recent history. It has to do with the '45 to '51 Labour government reforming the school and welfare system and bringing about social reform.

The 1944-45 Education Act transformed educational opportunity for a generation and instead of 6 or 7 percent of proletarian kids getting opportunities to go beyond 15 years of age at school, suddenly 30-40 percent of kids got into these places.

World War II highlighted how limited English society was in terms of education. Literacy was discovered to be a glaring deficiency. When you wanted people who could read telegrams you had people who couldn't. We also found that we had no technical training—that our educational system had not thrown up enough people who could even change a fuse. So for straight capitalist reasons the Labour Party had to educate more people. One of the unexpected consequences was a dynamic developed that had nothing to do with the original intention. You suddenly found people overeducated, wanting to do more than was available in society.

Why do British playwrights seem so much more political than their U.S. counterparts?

British playwrights reflect to a large extent the level of class awareness that exists in their society. You've got to understand that Britain is a profoundly different place. American playwrights talk about the characteristic preoccupations of their society. Psychoanalysis, material success and esteem, Americanness and conformity. These are traditionally what Americans see politics to be about, so the whole history of American left has been covered over. So it's very difficult to recover a usable past in America. Maybe it takes somebody shaped in Europe to do it.

How is your left analysis projected into your TV plays?

I'm not sure the plays do left analysis. They're not essays.

Continued on page 18

Trevor Griffiths, co-scripter of *Reds*, talks about the responsibility of the left playwright in the U.S. and in Britain.